

A Comparison of the Shorter Prose Works
of Anton Chekhov and Arthur Schnitzler

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Ph.D.

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1988



ABSTRACT

Although much criticism on the works of Chekhov and Schnitzler already exists, very few comparative studies have yet been made. This thesis attempts to redress the balance. By comparing and contrasting selected aspects of their narrative work, it aims not only to provide new insights into their prose works, but also to suggest further possible areas of more detailed study.

The choice of these particular authors as a subject of comparison is supported by a number of factors which make that choice both credible and logical. Chekhov and Schnitzler were near contemporaries and, in spite of their different backgrounds, belonged to societies which were similar in a variety of political, social, and cultural respects. Both men practised medicine, acknowledging the importance this had for their literary output, and for their 'world view'. As writers, they limited themselves mainly to dramatic and shorter narrative works, employing a variety of common themes, styles and techniques.

After an introductory chapter which aims to provide a broad overview of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's life and work, there is a survey of the largely perfunctory comparisons which other critics have made of both men. The number and variety of these highlight the potential scope for a more detailed study. Chapter three, dealing with the early reception of their entire work in each other's country, shows that in the early years of this century, owing to certain social, political, and economic factors, both men won equally high acclaim, a fact which contrasts with the situation today where Schnitzler is practically unknown in the Soviet Union, and Chekhov's popularity in Europe continues to grow. In chapter four, attention is given to the influence of medicine on their life and work. The chapter examines to what extent they

were influenced by existing medical traditions in Russia and Vienna, and how far these and their own attitudes to the profession are reflected in their literature. We find that their personal experience of medicine was an important factor behind a number of common medicine- and science-related themes and stylistic features, and it is these which give their work a certain affinity. Chapters five and six explore the formal and stylistic characteristics of their prose in greater detail. For a variety of reasons, including the need to find ways of expressing a new social and psychological awareness, Chekhov and Schnitzler shared a predilection for shorter literary forms. In the field of narrative fiction, the short story was their main vehicle of expression, yet within this genre, we also find Chekhov and Schnitzler making a broadly similar choice of narrative categories. Chapter five examines these more closely and seeks to demonstrate that this choice was largely motivated by common literary goals. Inherent in their literary technique is an eclectic approach which draws freely on a variety of literary styles and traditions. Employing devices and techniques variously associated with Impressionism, Naturalism, and Symbolism, their stories are seen to reflect a stylistic multiformity that bears witness to both men's commitment to the notion of artistic autonomy. An attempt to illustrate this is made in the penultimate chapter. The final chapter, a critique of Черный монах, Sterben, Дама с собачкой and Die Toten schweigen, is an attempt at a synthesis of the main tenets of the thesis. By examining in detail aspects of these four stories in the light of foregoing observations, the chapter seeks to vindicate this choice of topic.

A NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS AND EDITIONS

CHEKHOV

The edition used in this thesis is the most recent and most complete edition of Chekhov's complete works. Most of the omissions made by over-sensitive Soviet censors in the past have been restored. The edition includes all of Chekhov's plays and stories, as well as his letters, notebooks, essays, and other miscellaneous material.

Полное собрание сочинений и писем, 30 vols (Moskva, 1974-1983)

- Сочинения: I (1974) - XVIII (1982)

- Письма: I (1974) - XII (1983)

References in the text will be by volume and page number.

SCHNITZLER

The edition used in this thesis is the S.Fischer edition, Arthur Schnitzler, Gesammelte Werke, 6 vols (Frankfurt am Main, 1970-1981 (1961-)). It contains those works which were published during Schnitzler's lifetime, and those of the 'Nachlaß' published before 1961. Reference to the six volumes listed below will be by the following abbreviations:

E I, E II - Die erzählenden Schriften, 2 vols, second edition (1970 (1961))

D I, D II - Die dramatischen Werke, 2 vols, second edition (1981 (1962))

EV - Entworfenes und Verworfenes: Aus dem Nachlaß, edited by Reinhard Urbach, (1977)

AB - Aphorismen und Betrachtungen, edited by Robert O.Weiss (1977 (1967))

Other editions used are referred to by the following:

JiW - Jugend in Wien: eine Autobiographie, edited by
Therese Nickl and Heinrich Schnitzler (Wien, 1968)

B I, B II, - Briefe, edited by Therese Nickl and
Heinrich Schnitzler, 2 vols (Frankfurt am Main,
1981 and 1984), 1(1875-1912), 2(1913-1931)

TB I - Tagebuch 1909-1912 (Wien, 1981)

TB II - Tagebuch 1913-1916 (Wien, 1983)

TB III - Tagebuch 1917-1919 (Wien, 1985)

Werner Welzig is the chief editor of all three editions. Other references to Schnitzler's diaries are to the as yet unpublished typescript of Schnitzler's 'Tagebücher' in the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach am Neckar. Quotations are reproduced here with the permission of the Literaturarchiv, and are referred to by the abbreviation TB followed by the date of entry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks must go in the first place to my two supervisors, Dr. Andrew Barker and Mr. Michael Falchikov, whose patience, guidance, and support throughout the writing of this thesis have been invaluable. Without their help and encouragement, the task of completion would have been all the more burdensome.

It has been a source of great comfort to me to have been able to rely on the constant support of family and friends. It would be impractical to mention everyone by name, so I should like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all those who have offered their assistance and shown interest in my thesis at the various stages of its development, and who, by so doing, have helped and encouraged me.

Special acknowledgement of a certain few is indeed appropriate, however. In particular, I would like to extend my special thanks to Margaret Osborne for her many constructive criticisms and practical suggestions, but especially for her remarkable patience and unflagging support throughout. Her help is deeply appreciated. I am also grateful to Elisabeth Hall for the sympathetic encouragement she has shown me. Finally, I would like to thank Simonne Gompertz and her family, whose help and kindness to me over the past few years have been a source of great support and reassurance.

I certify that this thesis is my own work.

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CHAPTER 1
CHEKHOV AND SCHNITZLER AS A TOPIC OF COMPARISON

The choice of Chekhov and Schnitzler as the subject of a comparative study might seem arbitrary considering both men came from different social and religious backgrounds, had no personal contact with each other, and had little knowledge of each other's work. Closer examination reveals that there are good reasons for this choice, however. Chekhov and Schnitzler were born within two years of each other, and, though nationals of different countries, lived at a time of rapid social and technological development in all parts of Europe. Both men practised medicine, inheriting from their experience a broadly common system of values that informed their wider outlook on life. As writers, they thus employed a roughly similar choice of themes, techniques, and genres, which bear witness to the 'Fall von Übereinstimmungen in dichterischem Schaffen'¹ that is to be found in their work. It is one of the objectives of this study to draw attention to these 'correspondences'. In addition, however, the thesis aims, in Geĭdeko's words, to 'выявить [...] несомненные различия между этими авторами'², to 'stimulate thinking'³, and to point out avenues of further, more detailed study, thus giving to two highly influential writers a place in the ever-widening field of comparative literature.

¹Françoise Derré, 'Schnitzler und Frankreich', Modern Austrian Literature (henceforward referred to as MAL), 19/i(1986), 27-48 (p.42). The reference is to Schnitzler's affinity with certain French writers including Maupassant, Renard, Becque, Bernard, Dujardin, Bourget and others.

²Valeriĭ Geĭdeko, A.Chekhov i Iv.Bunin (Moskva, 1976), p.14. Geĭdeko's remark refers, of course, to Chekhov and Bunin.

³Lars P.Rømhild, 'Georg Brandes and Comparative Literature', in The Activist Critic, Orbis Litterarum, Supplement 5 (Copenhagen, 1980), pp.284-302 (p.286). Rømhild is here referring to the motivation behind Georg Brandes's work in the field of comparative literature.

The comparatist, as asserted by Rømhild, 'possesses the virtues and limitations of positivist duty to demonstrate and substantiate', but at the same time he runs the risk, in a broad study of this kind, of being 'uselessly pedantic and fundamentally boring' (p.293). In his study of Schnitzler and his French contemporaries, Derré writes: 'die Suche nach Parallelismen und Koinzidenzen ist natürlich so endlos wie die literarische Produktion der Zeit...man muß ihr ein Ende setzen' (Derré, p.44). Accordingly, an attempt has been made to set limits to the potentially endless search for parallels in Chekhov and Schnitzler. Only the most conspicuous and significant have been taken into consideration. The thesis, therefore, does not claim to be exhaustive.

The scope of the thesis is also determined by the need to keep it within manageable proportions. Certain decisions have thus been made; most significantly, the decision to concentrate on the shorter prose works of Chekhov and Schnitzler. In this country, if not in their own, both Chekhov and Schnitzler are better known as playwrights, rather than as writers of narrative. Comparisons of Chekhov and Schnitzler, though relatively few in number, mainly refer to their dramatic works. One of the aims of this thesis is to redress this balance and show that comparison of their stories can be as valid and enlightening as that of their plays. During a period of just over twenty-five years, Chekhov wrote several hundred stories of which the majority, penned under various pseudonyms in his early years, differed sometimes considerably in length, theme, style and quality from those written in the latter years of his life. However, it is on the much fewer stories of his later years, those written after about 1887, that his literary reputation is largely based. Schnitzler wrote fewer stories than Chekhov over a longer period of time. It is sometimes

argued that Schnitzler's development as a short-story writer stagnated in later years, (in this respect it is significant that many of the works that he wrote after the Great War depict turn-of-the-century Viennese society), and that the couple of decades spanning the turn of the century were his most creative. In view of this, the material under discussion in this thesis is drawn primarily from those stories written between 1887 and 1910, the period that some believe to be Chekhov's and Schnitzler's most creative and mature.⁴ These parameters are not rigidly adhered to throughout. References have been made to stories written both before, and in Schnitzler's case, after this period. Attention is also given to their plays and other various works, where these illustrate a general point more effectively.

Each of the chapters of this thesis addresses separate aspects of their work, with a view to outlining the scope of potential areas of comparison between Chekhov and Schnitzler. To have devoted attention to any single feature would be to have overlooked the many points of comparison that critics have ignored in the past. A piece of practical comparative criticism at the end of the thesis is an attempt at a synthesis of previous chapters. The critique aims to further substantiate the main tenets of the thesis. Taken as a whole, the thesis

⁴It is coincidental, but fortuitous for our purposes, that Schnitzler's first published stories coincided with Grigorovich's entreaty to Chekhov to take his literary work more seriously. Consequently, it was about this time that Chekhov embarked upon what is commonly regarded as the most significant stage in his literary career. In appendix one of Ronald Hingley's, A New Life of Anton Chekhov (London, 1976), entitled 'The Shape of Chekhov's Work', Hingley divides Chekhov's work into the early period (preceding March 1888) and the mature period (post March 1888). This latter group, consisting of what many consider to be Chekhov's most important works, numbers sixty stories in all and represents those sixty 'narrative type works' published by Chekhov in his mature period. It is to these that greatest consideration has been given in this thesis. See appendix A.

consists of preliminary investigations intended to show Chekhov and Schnitzler in a fresh, and hopefully stimulating light.

No single method of literary criticism has been adopted in this study. Effective as individual approaches can be in providing new insights into a work of literature, it is only when they operate in conjunction with each other, making use of the best of what each can offer, that they are at their most effective. This is particularly the case in a study as heterogeneous as this one where a variety of different aspects, including those of social and literary history, biography, theme, form, and structure, are all taken into consideration. Any broad-based comparison of Chekhov and Schnitzler of the kind which this one sets out to be cannot afford to narrow itself down unnecessarily.

At this point it seems expedient to put into context the two men with whom this comparison deals. What follows is a brief resumé of the life and works of Chekhov and Schnitzler. Although they were born within a short time of each other, in 1860 and 1862 respectively, their backgrounds were different in most other respects, including nationality, religion, and social class. Chekhov, one of six children, spent his formative years in the small provincial town of Taganrog on the Sea of Azov. His paternal grandfather had been a serf, but had purchased his freedom in 1841, long before the Emancipation of 1861; his father was a local shop-keeper, and the family was Russian Orthodox. In 1876, bankruptcy forced the family to move to Moscow, although Chekhov remained in Taganrog for a further three years to complete his schooling. When he too left Taganrog for Moscow in 1879, he took with him memories of the south that would remain with him for the rest of his life.

Schnitzler was born in Vienna of Jewish parents, the

eldest of three children, and grew up in the well-to-do, sheltered environment of the Viennese, Jewish 'liberale Bourgeoisie'. His father, Johann Schnitzler, was an eminent laryngologist at the University of Vienna, highly respected in Viennese medical circles in spite of the increasingly anti-semitic climate of the times. His father's success meant financial security throughout Schnitzler's childhood and early adulthood, and little exposure to the experiences of people outside his own milieu. Influenced by the values and artistic concerns of the Jewish middle-classes, and actively encouraged by his theatre-loving father, Schnitzler, like most Viennese intellectuals of his day, early on developed an enthusiasm for the theatre and the arts.

In the late 1870s, the hitherto divergent experiences of Chekhov and Schnitzler began to converge. In 1879, Chekhov and Schnitzler enrolled at the universities of Moscow and Vienna respectively to study medicine, Chekhov with some indifference on the suggestion of his mother, and Schnitzler under parental and social pressure, (medicine, law, journalism, and business were among the few professions open to middle-class Jews), graduating as qualified doctors in 1884 and 1885. The training they received during these years was to have a great influence on their subsequent lives. It was whilst still at university that both men embarked upon their literary careers, Chekhov as a means of supplementing the family income, (Chekhov had become the main breadwinner of the family ever since they had moved to Moscow), and Schnitzler in response to long-held aspirations. Chekhov's early literary career was more conspicuous than Schnitzler's. Even in the early 1880s, he contributed regularly to several of the popular 'тонкие журналы', and by the mid 1880s had won widespread popularity as a writer of mainly comic short stories and sketches. Recognition of Schnitzler's literary talents was less

swift. His father, dubious of the financial advantage afforded by a literary career, discouraged Schnitzler's efforts in that direction and urged him to devote more time to medicine. It was only when his father died in 1893 that Schnitzler finally left the Poliklinik where he was working at the time and took up writing seriously. He did not abandon medicine altogether, however, but practised privately for a long time to come.

As Schnitzler's literary reputation grew, and Chekhov turned to the more serious literature of his later years, both men were able to shape for themselves a lifestyle in which medicine and literature coexisted happily. Medicine left an indelible impression on both men, and its influence can be seen throughout their plays and stories. After graduation, Chekhov worked as a doctor in Moscow, often spending the summers as a country doctor in the surrounding areas. In 1892 he bought an estate in Melikhovo, not far from Moscow, where he continued practising medicine, and occupied a seat on the local council. It was during the Melikhovo years that Chekhov wrote the majority of what are now commonly regarded as his most mature works. In 1899, on the advice of his doctor, he moved to Yalta, in the Crimea, marrying the actress Olga Knipper in 1901. In 1904, whilst on holiday with his wife in Badenweiler, Chekov died from tuberculosis, a disease which had afflicted him for most of his life.

Schnitzler lived in Vienna all his life, and had little of the kind of variety of experience that Chekhov received from his professional and private life. He nevertheless played an active part in the intellectual and artistic life of Vienna, retaining his medical practice as an expedient safety measure. Like Chekhov, Schnitzler did not marry until the age of forty-one. Though suffering from increasing deafness in the latter part of his life, Schnitzler outlived his Russian

counterpart by twenty-seven years.

The influence that medicine had on the literature of Chekhov and Schnitzler is nowhere more evident than in the preponderance of medical practitioners, and cases of illness and death that we find in their work. Time and again both men depict the people and the problems of a profession of which they had intimate knowledge. Chekhov, in particular, as a city and country doctor, had the opportunity of acquainting himself closely with people from different walks of life. This is reflected in the variety of social types we find in his literary works, ranging from peasants to aristocrats, and from labourers to artists and professionals. Schnitzler's generally narrower experience of life meant that the range of types we find in his works is less varied. Comprising chiefly artists, doctors, and other members of the upper bourgeoisie, they represent that section of society in whose circles Schnitzler himself exclusively moved. Even more importantly for their literature, medicine enabled Chekhov and Schnitzler to develop a deep understanding of the psychology of human beings, an understanding which both men employed in the many psychological portraits we find in their stories and plays. Psychological realism, based on an acute grasp of the human psyche, is the core of their literary approach.

The influence of medicine can also be seen on Chekhov's and Schnitzler's philosophical outlook. Like the diagnostician investigating the symptoms of an illness, both men probe aspects of the human condition, identifying problems, posing questions, but rarely providing solutions. The reader must provide his or her own answers. Chekhov's and Schnitzler's own moral judgements are not obtrusive, but implicit and private. Both men avoided prejudice and dogmatism, in their private lives as well as in their writings.

Their distaste for anything that impinged on individual freedom is best seen in the suspicion with which they regarded politics and religion. As a Jew living in Vienna at the turn of the century, Schnitzler had direct experience of hostile political dogmatism. Although he was not a practising Jew and regarded himself first and foremost as an Austrian, Schnitzler nevertheless had to come to terms with a climate basically inimical to Austrian Jewry⁵. The Jewish problem, as it emerges in works like Leutnant Gustl, Der Weg ins Freie, and Professor Bernhardt, is, to Schnitzler, more than just a symptom of an ailing society; it epitomises the intransigence he so much disliked. Anti-semites and Zionists alike, not to mention politicians of all political hues, were guilty of the dogmatism which, in Schnitzler's view, restricted the freedom of the individual. Anti-semitism was also rife in late nineteenth century Russia but as a non-Jew, Chekhov avoided its burden. He was not indifferent to the problem, however, and when, in 1897, Suvorin, the editor of Новое Время, expressed views favourably disposed to the anti-semitic faction during the Dreyfus affair,⁶ Chekhov rushed to the defence of Dreyfus and Zola in protest against the hypocrisy and prejudice of the political right wing. The affair revealed not only Chekhov's antipathy towards political prejudice, but also his preparedness to stand by a principle in the name of justice and freedom. Schnitzler's ethical conscience was also finely tuned. In the wake of the trouble that

⁵The difficulties he encountered in getting a number of his plays performed, was just one of the more frustrating manifestations of this innate hostility.

⁶In 1894, Alfred Dreyfus, an officer in the French army and a Jew, had been unjustly convicted of espionage after an anti-semitic campaign of vilification by the right-wing press. The affair caused a lasting outcry among the more liberal-minded both in France and throughout Europe. Dreyfus was later proclaimed innocent.

Leutnant Gustl had aroused in conservative circles, Schnitzler refused to appear before a military tribunal on the grounds that it had no jurisdiction over his literary activities, (at the time Schnitzler was a reserve officer in the 'K u K Landesoberwehrkommando'), and as a result, was 'seines Offizierscharakters für verlustig erklärt'⁷. During the Great War, Schnitzler, unlike most of his literary peers, adopted an increasingly pacifist stance and refused 'sich in dilettierende Geschäftelhuberei hineinsetzen zu lassen' (p.279). This too was evidence of his reluctance 'nach außen hin irgendeinen Anschein erwecken zu wollen, aus reinem Formalismus etwas vorzugeben' (p.279). Chekhov shared this reluctance, sceptical of those who would see him commit himself to narrowly defined views and ideas. Thus, for example, he avoids the then popular stance of blind adulation of the peasantry; thus too he finds it unnecessary to condemn horsethieves and other obvious lawbreakers explicitly in his works, and thus he resists the temptation to adopt any single literary approach.

Their artistic kinship is manifested above all in the choice of the play and the short-story as their main vehicles of literary expression. Although both men also wrote a small number of longer works⁸, they turned most frequently to the small-scale prose genres, to those genres which, in their view, were best suited to portraying the kind of cameos of life both men wanted to show. Influences and conditions prevailing at the time also had a role to play in this choice. The long theatrical traditions of Vienna and the major Russian

⁷Renate Wagner, Arthur Schnitzler. Eine Biographie (Wien, 1981), p.127.

⁸For example, Chekhov's travelogue and sociological study, Остров Сахалин (1891-95), Schnitzler's novels Der Weg ins Freie (1905-07) and Therese (1928), and his autobiography Jugend in Wien (1915-18).

cities meant that drama had become a familiar feature of late nineteenth century European society. In Europe as a whole, there was a gradual shift of emphasis away from the novel towards other, shorter forms of expression.

Chekhov's and Schnitzler's distaste for dogmatism found expression in their art in the avoidance of specific philosophies and literary manifestoes. Thus in his mature years, Chekhov rejects as too authoritarian and moralistic the Tolstoyan ethics to which he had adhered in earlier years. In works like Палата но.6. Моя жизнь. В овраге. Человек в футляре. Новая дача. Дама с собачкой, Chekhov challenges the notions of non-resistance to evil, peasant virtues, conventional morality. Similarly, Schnitzler, like Freud a Viennese Jewish psychiatrist, rejects Freudian psychoanalysis as offering much too narrow an explanation of the human psyche. Schnitzler acknowledged Freud, as Chekhov did Tolstoy, to be a man of great intellect, but neither could accept what they regarded as Freud's or Tolstoy's occasional dogmatism. Both Chekhov and Schnitzler aspire in their work to an objectivity based on a pluralism of styles and techniques. They aim at a descriptive rather than a prescriptive approach, and adopt whatever means suit their purpose in order to achieve this. Eclecticism is the essence of their artistic kinship.

Few of their works submit easily to strict literary categorisation. Essentially they are products of the nineteenth century European realist tradition. In order to depict social and psychological reality, however, Chekhov and Schnitzler draw on a variety of methods and techniques associated with the modernist trends of the day: Impressionism, Naturalism, Symbolism, Decadence. It is in their tempered use of these different literary styles that we can see their eclectic approach to literature most clearly.

In their avoidance of explicit moral judgements, in the attention devoted to the portrayal of psychology and the evocation of mood, the work of both men reverberates with echoes of Impressionism. Where Schnitzler broadens the scope of the internal narrative perspective to penetrate the inner recesses of the human psyche, Chekhov develops the art of evoking moods that reflect and illuminate the essence of psychological experience. We see echoes of Naturalism in their attention to detail, in their fidelity to scientific fact, and in their concern with some of the pressing social issues of the day. Like the Naturalists, Chekhov and Schnitzler too were socially engaged writers. We also see echoes of Symbolism in the laconic style of their work. Suggestion, innuendo, implication, understatement are the hall-marks of their creative writing, requiring the reader to exercise constantly his own judgement and powers of interpretation. What many regard as Schnitzler's morbid obsession with love and death is evidence to some of Décadent tendencies in his work, although the pursuit of art for its own sake was never something which either Schnitzler or Chekhov entertained as a serious notion.

There are also stylistic and thematic differences, of course, chiefly in the fact that Chekhov tends to be less rhetorical, less declamatory than Schnitzler, drawing his characters and situations from common, everyday experience. Schnitzler, on the other hand, draws his from the rarer and therefore more conspicuous events of human experience, such as suicide, murder, and deception. Many would further argue that Schnitzler is more limited than Chekhov in terms of thematic range. There is some truth in this. Many of Schnitzler's works are not only located either in Vienna itself or in some provincial resort of the Habsburg Empire, but are also populated mainly by members of the Austrian middle classes. Certain basic themes, (love, death, illusion are the most common),

recur regularly throughout his work, - indeed, few critics have omitted to point out what they see as Schnitzler's preoccupation with eroticism, - while others, such as the plight of the poorer classes in turn-of-the-century Vienna, are conspicuous by their absence. Chekhov's stories, on the other hand, comprise a wide variety of geographical settings and social types, and his range of theme is accordingly varied. The discrepancy in the scope of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's work can be largely accounted for by differences in their experience of life. Schnitzler's was more limited than Chekhov's and thus offered less material to draw on in his literary work. Spending most of his life in Vienna, among friends, colleagues and medical patients of the same background and class as his own, Schnitzler's outlook on life was restricted by the sheltered and inward-looking ethos of the late nineteenth century Viennese Jewish bourgeoisie. By contrast, Chekhov lived and worked in a variety of different geographical locations among people of different social and ethnic backgrounds. He himself ascended the social ladder to take his place finally as a member of the educated, land-owning middleclass. Chekhov's professional life as city physician, country doctor, famine-relief worker, local council member, sociologist, and philanthropist provided him with a broad base of experience. He travelled widely both in Russia and Western Europe, and successfully completed a trip to the island of Sakhalin, an arduous journey which took him by a variety of means through the Urals and Siberia, to Hong Kong, Singapore, Ceylon and Suez. All this provided Chekhov with a breadth of experience that could only serve to enrich his imagination as a writer.

There are, however, many thematic parallels in Chekhov and Schnitzler's works. Their stories and plays revolve around the theme of man's relationship with his

fellow-beings and his environment. The 'heroes' of Chekhov and Schnitzler are generally those 'unheroic' characters who are constantly threatened by loneliness, sorrow, disillusion, fear. They are unhappy and dissatisfied people striving in their relationships with others after a happiness that eludes them. It is when their expectations of those relationships fail to materialise, (which happens often), that they feel most isolated and vulnerable. Friendships falter, marriages break down, liaisons disintegrate. Love is seen as rarely fulfilling and uplifting. In Chekhov, it is constantly undermined by social and domestic forces. In Schnitzler, it is reduced to an automatic ritual based on animal instincts, a ritual that respects neither class divisions nor conventional notions of fidelity; sexual liaisons take place between partners of different social groups, and men and women constantly betray their spouses and lovers. The relationship between men and women for both Chekhov and Schnitzler is never idealised, but is fraught with difficulties. To the partners, it is a source of constant anxiety, and only rarely of contentment.

Dissatisfied in their relationships with others, their characters often feel alienated and alone. In Chekhov, this is frequently due to their inability to communicate with each other. They talk to each other but do not listen, unable in any case to express their true feelings. Schnitzler's characters feel isolated chiefly because they are egotists, lonely not because they lack friends and companions, but because their self-preoccupation creates a wall hindering communication with those nearby. In other stories, both men turn their attention to the psychology of the sick and the dying, and to the psychology of those affected by the sick and the dying. Mental and physical illness are both brought under scrutiny. To Schnitzler, death is as important a theme in his works as that of love. To many of his

characters the certainty and permanence of death is a terrifying prospect which brings into sharper focus the impermanence and transience of life. Its effect on the living can be unpredictable and traumatic. To others, death represents a means of escape and freedom; suicide alone provides release from the misery of lost hopes and shattered ideals. In Chekhov, death plays a less prominent role. When his characters die, he tells us as if in passing, as if to suggest that there is little more to be said. His more sparing treatment of death, compared with Schnitzler's, underlines the fact that he is primarily concerned not with his characters' final moments, but with their everyday lives. Unlike Schnitzler's, Chekhov's characters do not have the strength of will to put an end to their own lives. Instead they endure the spiritual death of a kind of life where ideals, aspirations, beauty, dissolve into mediocrity. To Chekhov, 'пошлость', the combination of everything that is vulgar, wasteful, and complacent in life, is like a terminal illness that gradually invades both body and soul, eroding personal resolve and poisoning the individual's quality of life.

Chekhov's and Schnitzler's understanding of the female psyche is reflected in the subtlety of their female character studies and in the prominent role that women generally play in their works. Many of their stories comprise detailed and credible psychological portraits of women.⁹ The types of women portrayed by Chekhov and Schnitzler are not dissimilar. We find in their stories 'predators' and innocents, strong women and weak, abused women and women ready to abuse others. We see too in

⁹In one of Schnitzler's most famous female portraits, Fräulein Else, it is significant that he uses the stream-of-consciousness technique, a narrative perspective which presupposes a high degree of psychological understanding from the author.

works like Therese, Frau Berta Garlan, Невеста, Анна на мее, a tendency on the part of both men to depict women who challenge the status quo and assert their independence in a society that is essentially patriarchal and prejudiced. Such stories are evidence of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's common enlightened outlook on society.

Evidence of their social commitment is found in the attention both men pay to such issues that affected Russian and Austrian society at the end of the nineteenth century as prostitution and duelling, both of which were an affront to Chekhov's and Schnitzler's sense of justice and personal freedom, and embodied the hypocrisy and prejudice they so much disliked. Chekhov addresses other social problems, poverty, ignorance, injustice in a number of his stories, while Schnitzler exposes the dubious attitudes concerning sexual morality, the prejudices, and the hypocrisy of middle-class Viennese society. Chekhov and Schnitzler are more than psychologists intent on exploring the depths of the human soul, they also adopt, just as importantly, the role of social historian.

It is often argued that Chekhov's mature works, like all of Schnitzler's, are essentially pessimistic, a conclusion drawn on the basis of the large number of disillusioned and disappointed characters that we find in their plays and stories, and the sense of melancholy and despair that seems to pervade it. Whereas this may be true of Schnitzler, it is not as clearcut in Chekhov's case. Throughout Chekhov we notice that the recognition that life is often unfulfilling and disappointing is itself a source of comfort to the characters. The knowledge that at some time in the future life could be different, perhaps better, sounds a note of mild optimism even when the characters themselves know that nothing is likely to change for them. This realisation contains an element of irony which runs just below the surface in all

of Chekhov's work and accounts for the sense of absurdity that can be glimpsed through the 'gloom' of even the most pessimistic of his stories. There is much irony in Schnitzler's work too but little of the Chekhovian 'laughter through tears' to relieve the full thrust of his pessimism. To Chekhov, people have the power to shape their lives as they wish even if they rarely use that power effectively. To Schnitzler, however, human beings are not in control of their own destiny but governed by forces outwith their control, the forces of the unconscious, sexual instincts, envy, jealousy, fear. These forces are unpredictable and unsettling, revealing to the characters just how little they know of themselves. Schnitzler's characters live in a world of immense uncertainty. Unable to predict the future, they snatch at their happiness whenever they can, and attempt to escape from the trauma of uncertainty in the oblivion of love and, ultimately, death. What happiness they do happen to find is generally illusory, and serves only to reinforce the unpredictable nature of their existence. Deceived by appearances, out of touch with reality, they are themselves embroiled in deceit and self-delusion. Their inability to distinguish between reality and illusion constitutes a theme to which both Chekhov and Schnitzler devote much attention, but where Schnitzler sees illusion as intrinsic to the course of everyday life, Chekhov associates illusion with the ideals and aspirations of his characters. In their hopes of happiness and self-fulfilment, they try to escape the drudgery of their existence. All too often, however, they find that such hopes are ultimately thwarted by the realities of everyday life, and are often themselves responsible for wasting those few opportunities that come their way for realising their aspirations.

From the foregoing introduction it becomes evident that there is indeed a cogent case for providing a

comparative study of Chekhov and Schnitzler. It does not purport to be a comprehensive survey, but rather an illustrative overview of the more basic similarities and dissimilarities of their life and work. Some of the points made in this introduction will be dealt with more fully in ensuing chapters. Just as Chekhov and Schnitzler offer us cameos of life in their literary works, this work too reflects just part of the full potential scope of its subject.

CHAPTER 2 CHEKHOV AND SCHNITZLER COMPARED

2.1 Mutual Relations

As Chekhov and Schnitzler never met nor corresponded, relations between the two men were based entirely on what each knew of the other from hearsay or the written word. There are few extant references to Chekhov in Schnitzler's diaries and letters. As far as we know, there are no references to Schnitzler in Chekhov's. This is of little consequence, however, for it is not the influence of Chekhov on Schnitzler, (or of Schnitzler on Chekhov), that is under examination here but the similarities and dissimilarities of their works as they stand. Other critics too have drawn comparisons between Chekhov and Schnitzler on the basis of their literary output alone, and it is to these that attention will be given in this chapter. As an introduction to this survey, it makes sense to assess the extent of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's knowledge of each other's work.

2.1.1 Chekhov's Knowledge of Schnitzler

The absence of all references to Schnitzler, the man and his works, lays open the question of whether Chekhov was familiar with Schnitzler's work at all. The possibility that Chekhov was at any stage in his life influenced by Schnitzler can almost certainly be discounted, but we can say with some certainty that he was at least acquainted with Schnitzler's name, if not his literature. Chekhov was interested not just in Russian literature but in European literature, old and modern. We know that he read such writers, philosophers and scientists as Cervantes, Shakespeare, Maupassant, Zola, Ibsen, Maeterlinck, Hauptmann, Darwin, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. It need not therefore surprise us unduly to come across a mention of Schnitzler in a letter which Stanislavskiĭ wrote to Chekhov on 20 June 1904:

In Staraja Russa stehen jetzt Gastspiele von Marja Fjodorowna [Andrejewna] bevor. Sie spielt [...] "Der Star" von Bahr, "Der einsame Weg" von Schnitzler.¹⁰

Chekhov not only had an interest in the contemporary theatrical scene in Russia but was himself a part of it, and although the Moscow Arts Theatre¹¹, with which Chekhov was closely associated, did not include any of Schnitzler's plays in its early repertoire, it is unlikely that Chekhov would have been ignorant of the repertoires of those companies that did.¹² It is important to stress, however, that such a conclusion is the result only of reasoned conjecture, not of any conclusive evidence.

Ill-health may well have had some bearing on Chekhov's apparent lack of interest in Schnitzler. It was only in the latter years of Chekhov's life, when he was forced on health grounds to live in the Crimea, hundreds of miles from the main cultural centres of Moscow and St. Petersburg, that the Austrian writer was becoming widely known in Russia. Chekhov's death in 1904 came some years before Schnitzler's fame in Russia reached its zenith. In the time immediately before his death, Chekhov's attention was held primarily by those literary matters which concerned him directly, notably the completion of his Вишнёвый сад. Despite the voluminous nature of Chekhov's correspondence, he comments relatively infrequently on literary matters, (except in reply to those writers and aspirant-writers who sought

¹⁰Quoted in Stanislawski Briefe. 1886-1938, edited by Heinz Hellmich (Berlin, 1975).

¹¹Henceforward referred to as MAT.

¹²In a letter to Olga Knipper of 21 February 1904, (XII, p.41), for example, Chekhov enquires about the current visit to Moscow of the Komissarzhevskii Theatre whose programme included Ibsen's Nora, Nemirovich-Danchenko's Цена жизни, and Schnitzler's Märchen.

his advice). The fact that he does not mention Schnitzler in any of his writings may be attributed partly to a characteristic unwillingness, perhaps borne of modesty, to pass critical comment on other writers, still less to make comparisons between their work and his. It would be therefore wrong to assume that Chekhov's silence as regards Schnitzler was a clear indication of a negative response to the literature of his Austrian counterpart.

2.1.2 Schnitzler's Knowledge of Chekhov

Schnitzler, like some of the other members of Jung Wien¹³, was more forthcoming with his comments about Chekhov than Chekhov was with his about Schnitzler, (a fact which highlights the extent of interest that Chekhov aroused in Vienna and abroad). Schnitzler too was an extensive reader, familiar not only with German and Austrian literature, but with foreign (including Russian) literature as well. Like most German-speakers, Schnitzler first became acquainted with Chekhov through translations of his stories, which he greatly admired. It is indicative of the affinity Schnitzler felt between his work and Chekhov's that in an early diary reference to Chekhov he writes:

Tschechow, "Schatten des Todes" [Скучная история]. Im Anschluß daran, mit O[lgä Gußmann]

¹³Much ambiguity surrounds the term Jung Wien; see, for example, George M.O'Brien, 'The Coinage of "Jung Wien" in the Study of Austrian Letters', MAL, 15/i(1982), 85-96. In the present context, the term refers simply to that group of artists who frequented the Café Griensteidl in the early 1890s and who were more or less closely associated with Hermann Bahr. The best-known of the group included Bahr himself, Schnitzler, Beer-Hofmann, Hofmannsthal, and Salten. For a comprehensive discussion of Jung Wien, its name, constitution and beliefs, see Wunberg's introduction in Das Junge Wien, edited by Gotthart Wunberg, 2 vols (Tübingen, 1976), I, xxxvii-lxxxiii. Wunberg lists around twenty names of those who were associated with the group. See also Jens Rieckmann, '"Jung-Wien" - Prägung und Rezeption in den neunziger Jahren', MAL, 18/i(1985), 39-51.

Gespräch. Tschechow hat mehr Sicherheit als ich.
Wahrh.- Fehler meines Lebens, in nichts totale
Sicherheit zu haben. (TB, 26 August 1902)

It is a measure of Schnitzler's admiration for Chekhov's literary skill that he was always flattered by favourable comparisons with Chekhov, although a sense of inferiority convinced him that such a distinction was unjustified.¹⁴ One of the most illuminating insights into Schnitzler's view of Chekhov comes in a letter of 18 January 1910 to Peter Rotenstern-Svesditsch:

Es gibt in der gesamten Weltliteratur wenige Novellen, die so stark auf mich gewirkt haben, wie Tschechows "Zweikampf", [Дуэль], und "Schatten des Todes", [Скучная история]. Und von der Bühne herab hat nicht vieles einen so unvergeßlichen Eindruck auf mich gemacht wie "Onkel Wanja" [Дядя Ваня] in der Darstellung des Moskauer Künstlerischen Theaters, obwohl ich der russischen Sprache nicht mächtig bin. Von allen russischen Dichtern - und ich fühle wohl, daß es größere und umfassendere gegeben hat als Tschechow - hat keiner mit so rein menschlicher Stimme zu mir gesprochen als eben er. Ich habe ihn leider nie von Angesicht zu Angesicht gesehen, aber ich kenne ihn von Seele zu Seele und so bleibt er mir für alle Zeit lebendig. (B I, p.624)¹⁵

¹⁴On being told of his success in Russia, Schnitzler notes, 'insbesondere war mir angenehm zu hören, daß man mich mit Tschechow verwandt findet, den ich so sehr liebe. Neulich wieder, nach einer Lektüre von T.'schen Novellen habe ich in der sonderbar kindischen Empfindung: das muß ja ganz leicht sein, eine neue kleine Novelle zu schreiben versucht und bin,- wie beinahe in allen meinen letzten Sachen, nicht weitergekommen' (TB, 2 December 1902).

¹⁵Without casting doubts on the sincerity of Schnitzler's remarks, it is worth noting that the letter was intended for publication in the popular Russian journal Русские ведомости. It may therefore have been in Schnitzler's interests to create a good impression on his Russian readers. Norvezhevskii cites other evidence of Schnitzler's admiration of Chekhov, gleaned in an earlier interview with Schnitzler in 1909. He translates Schnitzler's comments thus: 'Люблю я вашего писателя Чехова. Это один из лучших, современных писателей. Какое изящество настроений, какая глубина мысли и сколько благородства по отношению к людям' (Oskar Norvezhevskii, Литературные силуэты, 1909, pp.61-69 (p.64)).

In 1906 Schnitzler attended the performances of the MAT in Vienna and was especially impressed by their production of Дядя Ваня. It was during this, their first visit to Vienna, that Schnitzler met certain members of the company, including Stanislavskiĭ and Chekhov's widow, Olga Knipper. Schnitzler renewed their acquaintance during the company's second visit in 1921. After a performance of Три сестры Schnitzler noted in his diary:

Stadttheater; Russ.Theater "Drei Schwestern" von Tschechow; wunderbare Aufführung, wenn auch manche Schauspieler zweiten Ranges. Der Regisseur bat mich (u Devrient) auf die Bühne; sprach einige; auch Frau Tschechow "die nicht stolz ist, nicht in Moskau zu sein"; aber sie können nicht zurück, da sie dort von Bolschewisten vielleicht erschossen würden. (TB, 8 April 1921)

Schnitzler does not seem to have recorded details of further conversations that took place between himself, Olga Knipper and the other members of the company. His admiration of the MAT's performances of Chekhov is beyond doubt,¹⁶ but what discussions took place about the works

¹⁶Schnitzler describes the MAT's performances with such phrases as 'außerordentlich' (TB, 18 April 1906), 'noch stärkerer Eindruck als beim ersten Mal' (TB, 20 October 1921), 'wundervolle Aufführung' (TB, 5 November 1921). Cäsar Segalow recalls how, at the MAT's Vienna performance of Три сестры, Schnitzler 'klatschte hingerissen wie ein junger Student. [...] Da wendete sich der Dichter an mich und meinte: "Der heutige Abend war für mich ein Ereignis, wie ich es in meiner ganzen Theaterkarriere vielleicht noch nie erlebt habe. Ihre Landsleute vom Moskauer Künstlertheater verdienen es wirklich, bewundert und bejubelt zu werden. [...] Und das Spiel ist so ungeheuer lebendig und drückt jedes Empfinden so klar und plastisch aus, daß man alles versteht, auch ohne russisch zu können. [...] Das ist kein Theaterspiel mehr, sondern eine Weihehandlung. Darum verstand ich. Man sprach nicht russisch, man sprach - menschlich!"' (Cäsar Segalow, 'Arthur Schnitzler als Theaterenthusiast', Illustrierte Rundschau, Jänner-Februar 1937, quoted in Hans-Ulrich Lindken, Arthur Schnitzler: Aspekte und Akzente (Frankfurt am Main and Bern, 1984), p.228). Interestingly, Segalow continues: 'In den beiden Stücken "Drei Schwestern" und "Der Kirschgarten" - Meisterwerke Anton Tschechows - weht ein Hauch reiner, stiller Natur, wie in den zarten, stimmungsvollen Stücken Schnitzlers. Deshalb vielleicht wurde er so ergriffen und begeistert' (p.229).

themselves remain a matter of conjecture.

In spite of Schnitzler's obvious familiarity with Chekhov's works, there is little suggestion of any direct influence. The majority of Schnitzler's earlier works were written before he became fully acquainted with the mature Chekhov, and in those stories and plays written during the last thirty years or so of Schnitzler's life, there is no explicit indication that Chekhov's works played any significant role in their genesis. Schnitzler acknowledged his debt to such writers as Maupassant and d'Annunzio more readily than he did to Chekhov, one reason being that he had had more time to become acquainted with their works.¹⁷

Chekhov's works may have had little direct influence on Schnitzler; Schnitzler's works may have had even less influence on Chekhov, but it is significant that the stories and plays of both men not only found a receptive audience in each other's country at approximately the same time in history, but that Chekhov and Schnitzler themselves shared mutual artistic attitudes and goals, as manifested in the many common thematic and stylistic features we find in their works.

2.2 Survey of Critical Comparisons

Vogel's claim, referring to comparisons between Schnitzler and other writers in general, that it is

unbefriedigend, immer wieder auf Vergleiche zu stoßen, die nicht durchgeführt werden, wie z.B. 'nach dem Muster Ibsens', 'nach dem Vorbild Maupassants' oder 'ich denke an Tschechow'.

¹⁷In a letter of 14 August 1896 to Olga Waissnix, Schnitzler writes, 'die Verwandschaft d'Annunzios mit mir, die Ihnen auffiel, ist schon...betont worden; auch ich glaubte sie manchmal zu empfinden. Freilich kann er viel mehr als ich, ist ruhiger und fleißiger; eine Neigung zum gekünstelt-psychologischen und koketten scheint auf Bourget'schen Einfluß hinzuweisen' (B I, p.296).

Konkrete Hinweise und Ausführungen wären
wünschenswert...¹⁸

is equally true of comparisons between Schnitzler and Chekhov, and it is with a view to taking the comparison further, that the present study has been undertaken. A variety of factors, differences in the societies which Chekhov and Schnitzler depict in their works (and in which they themselves lived), in their range of themes, in their perceived literary capabilities, have deterred critics from pursuing more thorough comparisons of Chekhov's works with Schnitzler's, but that we do periodically find critics prepared to make some connection between the two writers, underlines the potential scope for such a study. The following survey outlines some of the connections that critics have made between Chekhov and Schnitzler,¹⁹ thus lending support to the case for a more detailed comparison of their works.

Hopp's study²⁰, was the only work encountered that compares Chekhov and Schnitzler in any detail. Hopp concentrates more on the social background and the thematic content of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's work rather than on the literary techniques they use, focusing on what he sees as the parallelism of motifs, character and attitudes. In the first category, Hopp looks particularly at Chekhov's and Schnitzler's treatment of social issues,- social injustice, the changing society, 'the interplay of social relationships', are presented in works like В овраге, Мужики, Случай из практики and

¹⁸Margot E.Vogel, Schnitzler in Schweden: zur Rezeption seiner Werke (Uppsala, 1979), p.152.

¹⁹The survey cannot claim to be completely exhaustive. It contains all those comparisons I have come across during the course of my research.

²⁰Gerald G.Hopp, 'A Comparison of Motifs and Attitudes in the Works of Schnitzler and Chekhov', (MA thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 1969).

Therese, seeing in these works evidence of the social awareness of both men. In his study of the theme of human relationships in their work, Hopp sees human isolation as a common motif. In his view, the instability of relationships in Schnitzler, the inability to communicate in Chekhov, and the 'incapability of man to bestow himself unreservedly on one partner' in both, force Schnitzler's characters to find relief in fleeting liaisons, and Chekhov's to seek it in work. Hopp finds further parallels in the range of characters: in the odious politicians of Schnitzler and the petty officials of Chekhov; in the anti-heroes of Schnitzler who 'live for the moment and die meekly', and those of Chekhov who 'try to perceive meaning and die in failure'; in their doctor figures, characterised in Schnitzler by a more rigid adherence to a code of professional ethics, in Chekhov by a greater degree of eccentricity. Hopp finds evidence of parallel attitudes in Chekhov's and Schnitzler's commitment to objectivity, and in their avoidance of explicit judgements. As commentators on human weakness, Hopp claims, both men benefitted from a medical training that 'sharpened their perception of the human psyche'. He sees Chekhov and Schnitzler united in their distrust of politics and of those who 'set themselves up as arbiters of human conduct'. Above all, he sees in the two authors a close 'kinship of awareness and concern'.

Hopp's thesis is useful for indicating some of the main connections between the works of Chekhov and Schnitzler. It does not, however, go into any great detail and draws on only a fairly limited selection of works, albeit comprising both stories and plays. The majority of comparisons between Chekhov and Schnitzler, however, refer only to their dramatic works, the theatre critique being one of the main vehicles for such comparisons. This thesis aims to make clear that equally

valuable comparisons can also legitimately be made of their narrative work.

Typically, it is to their common medical background that critics of Chekhov and Schnitzler draw most attention.²¹ Their grasp of human experience in general is frequently attributed to the fact that both Chekhov and Schnitzler practised medicine and hence benefitted from the insight into the human condition that only medical practice could give them. Obolenskiĭ makes this point as early as 1901:

Und es ist bemerkenswert, daß sowohl Schnitzler als auch Chekhov eine medizinische Vorbereitung auf ihre belletristische Arbeit erfahren haben. Unwillkürlich erhebt sich die Frage: beeinflußt nicht der Arztberuf die Art der Ideen und Denkungsweise großer begabter und feinfühligere Menschen? Und ich meine eben den medizinischen Beruf: damit will ich sagen, daß die Grundlage eines solchen Pessimismus nicht in der Wissenschaft an sich zu suchen ist, sondern in der Tatsache, daß sich dem praktizierenden Arzt mehr als irgend jemand anderem die düstere,

²¹Driver, for example, mentions that both Chekhov and Schnitzler 'were doctors concerned with the psychological make-up of the figures about whom they wrote' (Beverley D.Driver, 'Hermann Bang and Arthur Schnitzler: Modes of the Impressionist Narrative' (PhD thesis, Indiana University, 1970), p.60). Trotskiĭ too points out that Schnitzler 'wie unser Cechov ist...seiner Ausbildung nach Arzt und übt diesen Beruf zum Teil auch aus' (Lev D.Trotzki, 'Über Arthur Schnitzler', in Literaturtheorie und Literaturkritik, translated by Thomas Kunke and Ulrich Mölk (München, 1973 (1902)), pp.62-75 (p.62)). The Swedish theatre director Per-Erik Wahlund mentioned their shared medical experience when asked in an interview about Schnitzler's kinship with Chekhov (cited in Vogel, p.9). Nesbit mentions Chekhov in his list of author-physicians (Louis Nesbit, 'The Medical Approach to Literature with particular Reference to Arthur Schnitzler', (PhD thesis, Cornell University, 1934). Zenke too asserts that Chekhov stands 'in der Reihe der großen Dichter-Mediziner Büchner, Schnitzler, Döblin, Benn, die einen wesentlichen Beitrag zur modernen Literatur leisteten' (Jürgen Zenke, Die deutsche Monologergzählung im 20.Jahrhundert (Köln and Wien, 1976), p.41). Kerner devotes a chapter each to Chekhov (pp.99-117) and Schnitzler (pp.117-33) in his book about doctor-writers. See Dieter Kerner, Arzt-Dichter: Lebensbilder aus 5 Jahrhunderten (Stuttgart, 1967).

grausame Seite des täglichen Lebens erschließt, ohne jegliche Hülle aus edlen Gefühlen, höherem Streben und Idealen.²²

Zvezdich too, some eleven years later, remarks on the common features of both men's prose - a psychological analytic quality, a marked humanistic element,- which Chekhov and Schnitzler derived from their respective backgrounds in medicine.²³ He goes on to name an emphasis on irony and sarcasm as further characteristics which Chekhov's and Schnitzler's works have in common (p.48).

In discussions of their dramatic works, critics have often compared the dramatic techniques of Chekhov and Schnitzler. Typically, the emphasis on atmosphere and mood, the absence of 'plot', the feeling of melancholy have been seen as those features of their works that draw Chekhov and Schnitzler closer together. Henderson argues that 'Schnitzler is a remarkable technical executant - essentially of the school of Shaw, Strindberg, Barker and Tchexov'²⁴. Nesbit similarly stresses the master-pupil relationship between Chekhov and Schnitzler with regard to dramatic technique. Chekhov's plays, he writes,

...which at first proved a failure on the stage, are not progressively developed plots, but 'slices of life' arranged and set together with a poetical, rather than with a dramatic purpose. They are calculated to arouse a certain lyrical atmosphere, and in bringing about this effect Chekhov shows sovereign mastery over his material. Katherine Mansfield and Arthur Schnitzler are among the numerous disciples of

²²Е.Obolenskiĭ, 'Немецкий Чехов', Нувелист, 8(1901), quoted in Heresch, Schnitzler und Rußland, p.29.

²³Peter Zvezdich, 'Большой поэт маленького поколения', Современный мир, 2-3 (1913), 67-81 and 32-57 (p.41).

²⁴Archibald Henderson, European Dramatists (New York, 1927), p.62.

his genre. (Nesbit, p.22)²⁵

Their plays are seen by many to embody a 'Theaterform...in der nichts geschieht' (Derré, p.38), and to make much of a lyrical, melancholic atmosphere. For some, affinities of this kind raise the question 'ob Tschechow der russische Schnitzler ist oder Schnitzler der österreichische Tschechow'.²⁶ In his critique of the MAT's performance of Дядя Ваня in April 1921, Auernheimer had already highlighted a connection with Schnitzler by describing the 'Melodie der russischen Seele' as 'ein "Weites Land"', the name of one of Schnitzler's plays.²⁷ In a review of Der Kirschgarten some forty years later, Blaha argues that it was by way of Schnitzler's 'symbolischen Realismus' that Vienna gradually developed

²⁵The question of Chekhov's direct influence on Schnitzler is less clearcut than either Henderson or Nesbit would like to make out. Koselka too seems to be jumping to conclusions when, in a review of Der Kirschgarten, he writes, 'der starke Einfluß Tschechows auf Schnitzler, der in unseren Seelenländern eine sehr verwandte Gesellschaftssituation zur Darstellung brachte, wird einem sehr deutlich' (Fritz Koselka, 'Tschechows Wollen schön erfüllt', Wiener Zeitung, 17 March 1973).

²⁶Friedrich Torberg, 'Ein Garten voll mit reifen edlen Früchten', Die Presse, 17 May 1960. Because of Schnitzler, he continues, people in Vienna are particularly receptive to Chekhov's 'sanft verhohlene Menschenbetrachtung', his 'unaufdringliche Melancholie', the 'abendlichen Pastellfarben seiner Untergangsstimmungen'. By contrast, West argues that the element of melancholy in both Chekhov and Schnitzler is often overstated: 'die tatsächliche unter den vielen nur behaupteten Gemeinsamkeiten des russischen Arztes und Dichters Anton Tschechow mit dem Wiener Arzt und Dichter Arthur Schnitzler liegt in dem Fehlverständnis, dem beide gerade in Wien gar so gern und gar so manipulativ zum Opfer gebracht werden: in beider Verfälschung zu melancholischen "Erahnen der ewigen Seele". Verdrängt werden soll damit gerade die wesentliche Dimension beider: das tiefe kritische Erfassen einer gesellschaftlichen Wirklichkeit, die zu den entscheidenden Prägnanzen eben auch der "Seele" gehört' (Arthur West, 'Ein Zeitalter wird abgeholzt', Volksstimme, 1 March 1983).

²⁷Raoul Auernheimer, 'Diadia Vania', Neue Freie Presse, 17 April 1921, p.1. Compare also Wertheimer's comments on the MAT's performance: '- russische Seele, du weites, graues Land' (Paul Wertheimer, 'Das Geheimnis der Russen', Neue Freie Presse, 30 April 1921, p.1).

a taste 'für diese russische Schaubühne der Seele'²⁸.

From early on, pessimism was regarded as a common feature of the works of both Chekhov and Schnitzler, although it must be said that Soviet critics especially, such as Shakh-Azizova²⁹ and others, have tended to emphasise what they see as Chekhov's optimism and forward-thinking. This pessimism is cited in many of the earlier comparisons particularly: 'An diesen Pessimismus in den dramatischen Werken Čechovs', Obolenskiĭ asserts,

fühlte ich mich besonders oft erinnert, als ich das kürzlich erschienene Büchlein des neuen deutschen Schriftstellers Arthur Schnitzler las, in welchem drei dramatische Etüden des originellen Autors vereint sind. [Der grüne Kakadu, Die Gefährtin, Paracelsus] [...] Nicht nur der Titel hält sie zusammen: in allen drei Etüden bricht dieselbe Idee durch, derselbe Pessimismus und dieselbe Stimmung, von der wir soeben gesprochen haben. (Quoted in Heresch, Schnitzler und Rußland, p.29)

Other critics, however, prefer to emphasise what they see as the 'bitter-sweet' mood of the works of Chekhov and Schnitzler, the 'sentimentality', the 'morbid Schönheit'.³⁰ These are the kind of characteristics which others exploit to link the works of Chekhov and Schnitzler. Kindermann, for example, writes how Lindner's performance in the role of Gaev in a 1960 production of Der Kirschgarten lends the character

²⁸Paul Blaha, 'Josef Gielens großartige Schaubühne', Express, 16 May 1960.

²⁹Tat'iana K.Shakh-Azizova, Чехов и западно-европейская драма его времени (Moskva, 1966).

³⁰People in Vienna, says Wagner, are 'mehr oder minder gewohnt, den großen russischen Dramatiker (ebenso wie Schnitzler) in einem gewissen elegischen Stil zu interpretieren, das Sterben der Gesellschaft in eleganter, müder, morbider Schönheit, vor sich gehen zu lassen' (Renate Wagner, 'Tschechows Zug der Schatten', Vorarlberger Nachrichten, 4 March 1983). Like Auernheimer sixty years before, it is interesting that Wagner too discusses Chekhov's play with an allusion to one of Schnitzler's, his Zug der Schatten.

qualities commonly associated with the characters of Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal,³¹ and Koselka emphasises Chekhov's and Schnitzler's common awareness of impending change,³² what Weigl calls 'das Wissen vom Ende'³³ and what Torberg calls 'Untergangsstimmungen' (Torberg, 'Ein Garten voll...').

Other commentators compare Chekhov and Schnitzler with regard to isolated aspects of their work. E.Steifova, for instance, devotes a chapter of her study to the question of male-female relationships in Chekhov and Schnitzler³⁴, while Rudolf Strauss, as early as 1897, had referred to Chekhov's treatment of women with an allusion to another of Schnitzler's plays, Liebelei; 'die heißen Leidenschaften', Strauss claims, 'sie sind uns fremd geworden. [...] Statt der schweren Liebe besitzen wir die leichte Liebelei. [...] Anton Tschechow...zeichnet in seinen bunten Geschichten die Frauen, wie er sie sah und fand, mit allem Licht und allem Schatten, mit allem Glanz

³¹'So erhält sein Gajev fast Hofmannsthalsche oder Schnitzlersche Züge mit, mehr liebenswürdig schwach als verdammswert, trotz aller Fahrlässigkeiten' (Heinz Kindermann, 'Das Schauspiel vom Untergang Alt-Rußlands', Österreichische Neue Tageszeitung, 17 May 1960).

³²'Die kultiviert-dekadenten Eigentümer des Landhauses, das samt dem geliebten Kirschenpark unter den Hammer kommt, geben ein vornehmes Bild ihrer nur mehr läßig-sentimental und gemacht heiter auf ihr Ende wartenden Klasse. Der starke Einfluß Tschechows auf Schnitzler...wird einem sehr deutlich' (Koselka, 'Tschechows Wollen...').

³³Hans Weigl, 'Viele Kirschen verderben den Garten', Illustrierte Kronenzeitung, 17 May 1960.

³⁴E.Steifova, 'Der Mikrokosmos der Beziehungen zwischen Mann und Frau als Abbild der zerfallenden Gesellschaft: A.P.Tschechow und A.Schnitzler', in 'A.P.Tschechow und die deutsche Novelle an der Wende zum 20.Jahrhundert' (Filozofitska Fakulta KV, Praha, 1978), pp.107-33. The dissertation was unavailable for study.

und aller Häßlichkeit'³⁵. Patera compares briefly Chekhov's and Schnitzler's reception throughout the world. It has always been a source of bitterness, he says, 'Tschechow über die ganze Welt gelobt und gespielt zu sehen, während Schnitzler, in vieler Hinsicht mit dem Russen verwandt, aber ein so viel umfassenderes Lebenswerk hinterlassend, zu "der Welt von gestern" gezählt wird'³⁶. This fact is not a question of Chekhov being a better dramatist or prose writer than Schnitzler. One comes nearer the truth, says Patera,

wenn man die Sache mehr kulturpolitisch und soziologisch betrachtet. An dem künstlerischen Theater Stanislavskijs hatte Tschechow einen unermüdlichen Propagandaapparat gefunden, die bis zum äußersten Rand des Naturalismus feingeschliffenen Tschechowinszenierungen der Russen setzten der ganzen Welt einen bewunderten Standard. Tschechow war Russe, und die Russen haben ihn auch während der wechselnden Bewertung des Kommunismus immer als einen der ihren, einen echten Sohn des Volkes betrachtet. Schnitzler war Österreicher, Wiener - aber dazu noch Jude, nie von ganzem Herzen und hundertprozentig von seinem Vaterland, seiner Heimatstadt akzeptiert, oft angegriffen, sogar verhaßt auf Grund seiner Abstammung. Während der nazistischen Periode war es verboten, Schnitzler zu spielen, zu drucken und zu lesen. Gewiß wurde er vor dem ersten Weltkrieg und zwischen den beiden Kriegen fleißig gespielt, gewiß wird er jetzt wieder gespielt und durchaus nicht nur in Österreich, aber in das Spiel um seine Dramen ist Politik geraten. (p.151)

Both Chekhov and Schnitzler are mentioned in Zenke's book on the German 'Monolog Erzählung' in the twentieth

³⁵Rudolf Strauß, 'Anton Tschechow', Wiener Rundschau, 22(1897), 851-55 (p.853). The word 'Liebelei' had been used for the title of an edition of Chekhov stories, Russische Liebelei, translated by L.Flache-Fokshaneanu (München and Leipzig, 1897), which included Der Unfall, Der Windbeutel, Volodja der Große und Volodja der Kleine and Ariadna.

³⁶Paul Patera, in Uppsala Nya Tidning, 4 February 1960, cited in Vogel, p.151.

century. In a section devoted to Chekhov (Zenke, pp.38-39), Zenke argues that in Chekhov's early stories he attempts to eliminate a personal narrator and thus creates a forerunner of the twentieth century 'Monologerzählung' of which many of Schnitzler's stories are examples. Schnitzler's use of the interior monologue is dealt with in some depth in the latter part of the book. In Baumann's study of Schnitzler's work, Baumann mentions briefly Schnitzler's affinity with Chekhov and other writers in their use of the one-act play and the episodic novella:

Folgerichtig bildet hier das Spiel in einem Akt, analog zur Episoden-Novelle, die angemessene Wesensform Schnitzlers wie der "innere Monolog" seiner Ausdrucksweise am meisten entgegenkommend. Auch hier gesellt er sich gleichermaßen noch zu Strindberg oder Tschechow wie schon zu T.S.Eliot oder Christopher Fry, zu Pirandello oder Giraudoux.³⁷

This last comparison between Chekhov and Schnitzler, and indeed, most of the foregoing comparisons, are examples of 'Vergleiche, ... die nicht durchgeführt werden' (Vogel, p.152). None of them, except Hopp's thesis, forms part of a detailed comparative study and Chekhov, as Vogel says, 'wird nie als Vorbild erwähnt, man zieht nur Parallelen zu ihm' (Vogel, p.150). The mere number of references to Chekhov and Schnitzler, however, suggests that such a study would be both feasible and illuminating. The range of comparable topics is broad. Driver, in her comparative study of Schnitzler and Bang, summarises what for her are the main affinities between Chekhov and Schnitzler:

In theme and impressionist technique Schnitzler was closer to Chekhov than to any other Russian author...Both were interested in the existential experience of loneliness, where those closest to

³⁷Gerhart Baumann, Arthur Schnitzler: Die Welt von Gestern eines Dichters von Morgen (Frankfurt am Main and Bonn, 1965), pp.37-38.

a figure are totally unaware of his anguish and his passions. Both men treat the problem of aging and the elder man's regrets for unfulfilled dreams and unrealized projects. The interplay of dialogue and narration, the relationship of people to objects, and the impressionistic usage of weather and scenery are common to both. [...] after Stanislavskii's triumphs in Austria Schnitzler was eager to have this great Chekhov interpreter also direct one of his plays. Thus Schnitzler, like Bang, began his works under the influence of the French realist school and, in his more mature years, felt drawn closer and closer to the great Russian authors. [...] Walther Kotas commented that the Danish Impressionists read Zola, Flaubert, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, but that they followed the master stylists Maupassant and Chekhov. The same might be said of Schnitzler. (Driver, pp.61-62, p.63)³⁸

Some critics have regarded all comparisons between Chekhov and Schnitzler as inappropriate. Their works seem too disparate to warrant fruitful comparison on anything more than a superficial basis. Trotskiĭ, for example, acknowledging Chekhov's and Schnitzler's common medical experience, continues: 'wenn wir dem hinzufügen, daß Schnitzler ein sehr talentierter Schriftsteller ist, so ist dies wohl auch alles, was ihn mit Čechov verbindet' (Trotzki, p.62). Discussing a 1945 production

³⁸Compare also Weigl's summary: 'Für viele Dichter der neuen Zeit mag gelten, was man zur Charakteristik des einen Hundertjährigen, Arthur Schnitzlers, einmal erkannt hat: sein Werk spiegelt "das Wissen vom Ende". Bei ihnen allen scheint mit dem ersten Wort schon das letzte, mit der anklingenden Stimmung schon der Ausklang vorweggenommen. Die Botschaft wird nicht so sehr verkündet als stillschweigend vorausgesetzt und rückt vom Text in den Raum zwischen den Zeilen - so ist's bei Hamsun und Schnitzler, bei Strindberg und O'Neill, bei dem, was von Hauptmann lebendig bleiben konnte, bei Gorki und Tschechow. Die Entwicklung und die Auseinandersetzung werden innerhalb des Werkes weniger erheblich, die dargestellte Welt tritt als Ganzes in Erscheinung, die Figuren reden nicht mit- und gegeneinander, sie reden nebeneinander, sie sprechen keine Dialoge, sondern Monologe des Autors mit verteilten Rollen. Und die scheinbare, alle Zeitgenossen schockierende zunehmende Formlosigkeit ist nicht Schwäche des Gestaltens, sondern Bestandteil der Gestaltung, ist Form und Inhalt zugleich' (Weigl, 'Viele Kirschen').

of Onkel Wanja, Koselka writes: 'Anton Tschechow wurde jüngst mit Schnitzler verglichen. Auf "Onkel Wanja" trifft das nicht zu. Hier weht Strindbergsche Luft',³⁹ while Shakh-Azizova, in her book about Chekhov and contemporary western European dramatists (see above)⁴⁰, does not even mention Schnitzler at all.

To claim that Chekhov and Schnitzler are directly comparable in all aspects of their life and work is as erroneous as denying the feasibility of any comparison whatsoever. Both men came from different cultural and social traditions and, apart from their shared medical experience, led different lives; the nature and the effect of the difficulties, disappointments and successes on themselves and on their literature were often dissimilar; not just the volume of their work but also its impact and, in some cases, its range of theme if not its form, differed. Such disparities have helped to dissuade critics from comparing the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler in detail. They do not, however, preclude the possibility of a detailed comparative study of the kind that the number and variety of isolated references to both men suggests is both possible and useful.

³⁹Fritz Koselka, 'Die Insel in der Komödie', Wiener Zeitung, 20 October 1945.

⁴⁰In the book, she examines Chekhov's dramas in terms of an amalgamation of certain aspects of the theatre of Zola, Hauptmann, Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Strindberg and Shaw.

CHAPTER 3 THE EARLY RECEPTION OF THEIR WORKS

3.1 Schnitzler in Russia

Ever since the 1930s, with the exception of isolated articles and reviews,⁴¹ Schnitzler has received little attention from Soviet critics and scholars. As far as we know, Der Schleier der Beatrice in Baku in 1930, was the last of his plays to be seen on any Russian stage.⁴² A new edition of eighteen short stories which appeared in 1967⁴³ marked the end of thirty six years of silence. It was followed in 1971 and 1973 by two further editions of Austrian short stories, both of which included Schnitzler's Die Frau des Weisen.⁴⁴ Nothing has appeared since. Welcome as these new publications are, they cannot be seen to represent a Schnitzler renaissance of the kind that has taken place in the West over the last couple of decades. The little criticism the Soviet Union offers, however, seems to suggest that the reappraisal of recent years has led critics to regard Schnitzler as less of a Decadent, than as a realist influenced by the Decadent movement. Despite his role as an observer of a decaying society and as an astute psychologist, (albeit inferior, in the view of many, to his European contemporaries such as Mann, France, Shaw and Chekhov), there is little

⁴¹For further details, see Heresch, Schnitzler und Rußland, pp.186-92. Much of the information on Schnitzler's reception in Russia given in this chapter comes from Heresch's various studies on the subject.

⁴²A parody of Schnitzler's Fink und Fliederbusch with the same title as Schnitzler's play, took place in Moscow in 1934.

⁴³Жена мудреца: новеллы и повести (Moskva, 1967).

⁴⁴The last of these, Österreichisches Erlebnis, [События поавстрийски] (Moskva, 1973), included stories by such authors as Rilke, Hofmannsthal, Kafka, Musil and Zweig.

evidence of any significant Schnitzler revival.⁴⁵ There are certain obvious reasons for this. Ideologically, Schnitzler's work runs contrary to Marxist trends in Soviet literature. Schnitzler's apparent emphasis on individualism is in direct opposition to the Marxist emphasis on collective responsibility and experience, and the political and economic dimension of Marxist ideology plays a minimum role in Schnitzler's work. For most Russians of today, Schnitzler's portrayal of Viennese bourgeois society at the turn of the century, (predominantly bourgeois Jewish society), reflects an era which is far removed from the realities of contemporary Soviet society. It is also for largely the same ideological reasons that Schnitzler's works have received comparatively little attention in the DDR, where the 'decadent' characteristics of his plays and stories and their apparent individualistic emphasis on Viennese middle-class intellectuals at the turn of the century set them clearly at odds with the Socialist Realist literary trends of the 1960s and 1970s in the East.

The comparatively poor reception of Schnitzler's works in the Soviet Union during the last fifty years contrasts significantly with their reception in Russia during Schnitzler's own lifetime. The popular response to Schnitzler's works, first to his stories and then to his plays, ensured that by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century Schnitzler ranked among the most popular living Austrian writers in Russia. Translations of his major works appeared regularly and productions of his plays could be seen periodically at many of the leading theatres. Coming at a time when recognition in

⁴⁵It remains to be seen whether or not the policy of 'glasnost', with all its attendant implications for freedom in the arts, will have any noticeable significance in terms of Schnitzler's rating in the Soviet Union.

his own country was impaired by the hostility of anti-semitic agitators, critics, and theatre-managers, Schnitzler's success in Russia lasted for a period of about twenty years. Always sensitive to adverse criticism, Schnitzler reacted warmly to news of his popularity, and made every effort to encourage it.⁴⁶ The popular acclaim with which his works were received helped to allay personal doubts about the validity of his decision to pursue literature as a career.

Schnitzler's association with Russia began with the publication and subsequent production of Liebelei in 1895⁴⁷. This was followed in 1896 by a production of the same play in St.Petersburg. Despite the success of both productions, however, initial interest in Schnitzler revolved around his early short stories.⁴⁸ This can be largely attributed to the fact that, in Vogel's words,

⁴⁶A measure of the importance which Schnitzler attached to the success of his works in Russia may be glimpsed from an extract of a letter dated August 1907 which Stanislavskiĭ wrote to the editor of 'Shipovnik' publishers, S.I.Grshebin, asking him to delay publication of Maeterlinck's L'Oiseau Bleu until after its production on stage: 'Maeterlinck hat sein Stück Russen anvertraut.... Eine ganze Reihe berühmter Schriftsteller, angefangen bei Hauptmann, Strindberg, Schnitzler und anderen, sind Maeterlincks Beispiel gefolgt. Sie senden uns ihre Manuskripte, fordern keinerlei Garantien und bitten uns darum, daß die Uraufführung in Rußland erfolgen soll. Nicht nur das. Ohne jede Bitte unsererseits geben sie uns freiwillig das Versprechen, das betreffende Stück in ihrer Heimat nicht zu drucken, solange es bei uns nicht gespielt worden ist.' (Stanislavskiĭ, Briefe, p.236). In a diary entry of 17 April 1921, Schnitzler expresses his annoyance about the lack of royalties coming to him from Russia, since at that time she was not party to any agreement safeguarding foreign artists' rights: 'Leon. erzählt mir von den zahlreichen Aufführg. in der letzten Zeit, besonders Anatol, Reigen,...Liebelei. Das stärkste war Märchen...Man war erstaunt, daß ich bisher aus Rußland kaum ein paar Kronen erhalten!- '.

⁴⁷This took place as part of the Nezlobin Summer Festival in Moscow.

⁴⁸By 1899, Die Toten Schweigen, Ein Abschied, Der Ehrentag, Um eine Stunde, and Die Frau des Weisen had all been translated into Russian at least once. Of the plays, only Liebelei and Das Vermächtnis had appeared thus far. For further details, see Heresch, Schnitzler und Rußland, pp.167-92.

'vor Schnitzler in Rußland die Erzähler tonangebend waren' (Vogel, p.164).⁴⁹ His stories, moreover, found a responsive readership amongst educated Russians, who saw certain parallels between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and their own homeland. As Schnitzler's stories became better known, so too did his dramatic works begin to reach a wider audience, with Liebelei remaining a regular fixture in the Moscow and St.Petersburg theatre repertoires right up until Schnitzler's decline in the 1920s. Productions of Schnitzler's plays were not, however, confined to Liebelei. Das Vermächtnis, which received its first performance in 1900, in Moscow, was one of several plays that enjoyed even greater popularity in Russia than it did in either Germany or Austria. The trilogy Der grüne Kakadu, Die Gefährtin, and Paracelsus, and the one-act cycle Lebendige Stunden also had their premières in Moscow in 1901 and 1902 respectively, with the full Anatol-cycle being staged in 1904 with similar success.⁵⁰ Translations of both his narrative and dramatic works appeared with increasing frequency, and by 1903 two separate editions of Schnitzler's complete works were in their preparatory stages.⁵¹

Heresch indicates that Russian criticism of Schnitzler tended to follow one of three tracts. Most critics concerned themselves with the philosophical and

⁴⁹Drama, of course, played an important role in Russia at the turn of the century, but people were more used to the realist narrative classics of such writers as Pushkin, Gogol', Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky than the abstruse drama of European Impressionism. Such is not to deny, however, the popularity enjoyed by the dramatic works of Gogol', Tolstoy, Griboedov, Ostrovsky and others at the time.

⁵⁰Individual plays from the cycle had already appeared from as early as 1900, and continued to be staged with a degree of regularity until the October Revolution.

⁵¹Artur Shnitsler, Полное собрание сочинений, 3 vols (Kiev, St.Petersburg, Kharkov, 1903-1911), and Полное собрание сочинений (Moskva, 1903,1905,1910).

psychological aspects of his work, stressing, like Zinaida Vengerova, (one of Schnitzler's Russian translators and personal friends), M.S.Gukovskii, L.E.Obolenskiĭ and others, such themes as the search for truth in Schnitzler's work, predestination, and the distinction between reality and illusion.⁵² Other predominantly Marxist critics, addressed themselves to what they saw as Schnitzler's socially disengaged art. For them, works such as Leutnant Gustl and Freiwild did not go far enough in confronting social reality; they were too subjective, too 'D cadent', too bourgeois. That his plays and stories dealt largely with the psychological and moral problems of 'politically impotent' upper middle-class individuals was enough to convince critics like Trotskiĭ of Schnitzler's socially divorced aestheticism:

Schnitzler ist ein  sthet und nichts als ein  sthet. [...] Es scheint, die Fesseln der soldatischen Kastenmoral sind f r Arthur Schnitzler das einzige gesellschaftliche Objekt seines Protestes als K nstler. [...] In allem  brigen, was aus seiner Feder flie t, geht er nicht  ber individuell-psychologische Probleme hinaus.

Halbe Liebe mit den darauf gedeihenden  sthetischen Kombinationen; Kunst als Selbstzweck im Dienste der Sch nheit; Furcht vor dem Tode, die allen Freuden des Daseins eine besondere, fast krankhafte Intensit t verleiht - das ist die Dreieinigke t des k nstlerischen Glaubensbekenntnisses von Arthur Schnitzler. Und wenn dies ausreicht, das dekadente Kunstschaffen zu kennzeichnen, dann kann man die Behauptung von Bartels bejahen, wonach Arthur Schnitzler unzweifelhaft ein 'Decadent' ist. (Trotzki, pp.63-64)

⁵²See, for instance, Gukovskii, 'Артур Шницлер', Жена мудреца (Odessa, 1901), pp.1-12; L.E.Obolenskiĭ, p.8; Zinaida Vengerova, 'Артур Шницлер', Литературные характеристики 3(St.Petersburg, 1910); Zinaida Vengerova, 'Артур Шницлер', Северь, 44(1898); Zinaida Vengerova, Вестник Европы, 9(1898), 423.

Trotskiĭ here overlooks, however, the extent to which Schnitzler deals with social issues in such works as Liebelei, for example, Das Vermächtnis and Professor Bernhardi; indeed, Schnitzler was clearly more socially engaged than many of his Viennese 'aesthete' contemporaries. In an early review of the fifth volume of Schnitzler's complete works,⁵³ Blok expresses surprise at Schnitzler's favourable reception in Russia, adding that Schnitzler is 'один из наименее важных современных западных писателей'⁵⁴. Yet for others, most notably the actor, director and one-time pupil of Stanislavskiĭ, Vsevolod Meierkhol'd, Schnitzler's plays provided a platform for experimentation in theatrical aesthetics. Meierkhol'd was interested in the notion of Impressionist and Symbolist theatre and experimented with a number of Schnitzler's plays, including Der Puppenspieler, Der grüne Kakadu, Der Ruf des Lebens and Der Schleier der Beatrice.⁵⁵ For Meierkhol'd, space, colour, movement and music became the new symbols of expression. An interesting contrast arose between Meyerkhol'd's 1910 production of Der Schleier der Pierette and a production of the same play three years later by A.Tairov in Moscow. Meierkhol'd presented the pantomime as a 'chilling

⁵³Artur Shnitsler, Полное собрание сочинений, 5 vols (Moskva, 1903-06).

⁵⁴Aleksandr Blok, 'Артур Шницлер', in Собрание сочинений, edited by V.N.Orlov et al., 8 vols (Moskva, 1960-1963), 5(1962), 621. Schnitzler's physiognomy, Blok continues with scant regard for personal details, reflected the 'черты его произведений: невыстраданность, легковесность и неодоухотверенность. Вот почему Шницлер не современен и писания его безвременны, как легкий, талантливый фельетон' (p.622).

⁵⁵Директор кукольного театра, Tiflis, November 1904; Зеленый попугай, Rostov na Donu, April 1906; Крик жизни, Rostov na Donu, April 1906; Шарф Колумбины, Peterburg, October 1910; Шарф Колумбины, Petrograd, April 1915. Meierkhol'd had been something of an early champion of Schnitzler. His other productions included Последние маски, Kherson, November 1902; Забава and Литература, Kherson, September 1903; Сказка, Kherson, October 1903.

grotesque'⁵⁶, an example of symbolist 'Bewegungstheater', adapting the original and renaming it Шарф Колумбины. By contrast, Tairov created a 'Gesamtkunstwerk', a piece of 'synthetisches Theater'; he included music by Richard Strauss and prefaced the performance with a poetry recital. It is indicative of Russian literary tastes at the time that Tairov's production was more popular than Meierkhol'd's.⁵⁷

Meierkhol'd's production of Der Ruf des Lebens in 1906 took place three weeks before its German language première in Berlin⁵⁸. A year previously Zwischenspiel had received its world première in St.Petersburg, the first of several of Schnitzler's plays to receive their first performances in Russia, rather than in Vienna or Berlin. Das weite Land was first seen at the Novyĭ Dramaticheskii Teatr in St.Petersburg in 1910, a year before it first appeared in Germany; and Reigen received its first performance at the Novyĭ Teatr Kochmanskogo in Moscow in 1917. It is indicative of the relative moral permissiveness of Russian society at the time that this production in Russia, as Heresch points out, did not create any of the scandal that it did at its Berlin première in 1921. Indeed, the play was praised for its depth of psychological insight and artistic invention.⁵⁹

Russian interest in Schnitzler reached its height in the decade or so prior to the Great War. In 1907 a new

⁵⁶Meierhold on Theatre, edited by Edward Braun (London, 1969), p.113.

⁵⁷See Elizabeth Heresch, 'Arthur Schnitzler in Rußland', MAL, 10/iii-iv(1977), 283-309 (pp.291-92).

⁵⁸On the 6 February 1906 at the Dramaticheskii Teatr Komissarzhevskoi, St.Petersburg. Meierkhol'd directed another production of the play with the group 'Tovarishchestvo novoĭ dramy' at Poltava in the Summer of 1906. Interestingly, Meierkhol'd writes of this production that all 'Chekhovian atmosphere was banished' (cited in Meierhold on Theatre, pp.64-65). (My emphasis).

⁵⁹See Heresch, Schnitzler und Rußland, p.90.

Russian edition of Schnitzler's collected works appeared⁶⁰, the third to date. Two translations of Der Weg ins Freie appeared in Russia in 1908⁶¹. Together with Professor Bernhardt in 1912 and various other plays and novellas, (including Märchen, Freiwild, and Leutnant Gustl), the novel helped to underline Schnitzler's concern with current social issues, a concern which hitherto had not been fully appreciated by his Russian public.

Schnitzler remained popular up until the mid twenties, with the small exception of a brief incident in 1914 that in fact damaged his pride more than it did his reputation.⁶² The main centres of culture in Russia regularly hosted productions of his plays and new editions of his works were regularly to be seen. The picture began to change after about 1924 when the number of new editions and new stage productions began to decline. Only a further two Schnitzler productions were to be seen on the Soviet stage: Anatols Hochzeit in Rostov in 1925, and Der Schleier der Pierette in Baku in 1930. It is conceivable that continuing hostility

⁶⁰Artur Schnitzler, Полное собрание сочинений, 4 vols (Moskva 1907).

⁶¹Artur Schnitzler, Путь к свободе (St.Petersburg, 1908), and Artur Schnitzler, На волю (Moskva, 1908).

⁶²Shortly after the outbreak of war, Kuprin published an open letter in Русское слово on 23 September 1914 attacking Schnitzler for allegedly criticising, among others, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. 'Для вашего... поступка', Kuprin wrote, 'есть только три логических оправдания: трусость, подлость или то стихийное безумие.... Но вы позволили себе в вашем смешном письме огулом обругать Толстого, Достоевского, Шекспира, Анатоля Франса, Метерлинка. [...] Уже из вашего синодика видно, что вы или совсем ничего не читали, или читали с таким успехом, как корова жуёт жасмин'. (А.И.Куприн о литературе, edited by F.I.Kuleshov (Minsk, 1969), pp.241-42). Eager to preserve his standing among the critics, Schnitzler quickly refuted the allegations and the matter was soon resolved.

towards Germany in the wake of the Great War was a factor in this, (although Schnitzler himself had been one of the few writers who refused to lend his support to the propaganda effort). More likely, however, is that Schnitzler's demise was attributable to changes in Russia after the October Revolution of 1917. The gradual integration of Marxist-Leninist ideology into all walks of Soviet life including art and literature meant that Schnitzler's works now faced a continuing uphill struggle. The mid 1920s had not yet seen the level of restrictions on artistic expression that prevailed in later years, but the tide of public opinion that had at one time been responsive to the kind of literature that Schnitzler wrote was nevertheless rapidly turning. Schnitzler's name appeared only sporadically in the latter half of the 1920s, and hardly at all between 1931 and 1967.⁶³ The occasional reference that we do find in criticism of this period invariably describes him either as a Decadent, a Symbolist or a Romantic, the epitome of western bourgeois capitalism.⁶⁴ The few editions of Schnitzler's works that have appeared during the 1960s and 1970s represent little more than an attempt on the part of Soviet literary historians to accredit him with a place in the history of European literature. As such, this renewed interest is only fairly limited.

Schnitzler's reputation in Russia during the first part of the century may be accounted for in several ways. The novelty of his work, Schnitzler's psychological

⁶³Vogel confirms that this was also the case in Sweden between the 1920s and the beginning of the 1950s, positing the dominance of 'Arbeiterdichtung' and other socially engaged literature at this time, the effects of Hitler's rise to power and, later, an emphasis on war literature and Expressionist literature as reasons for this (Vogel, p.94).

⁶⁴See E.Kosinskaia, 'Шницлер и литература загнивающего капитализма' (dissertation, Moskva, 1941).

Impressionism, the local, Viennese colour and appeal of works like Anatol, Märchen, and Liebelei, provided a welcome alternative to the by now all-too-familiar longer prose-works of the nineteenth century Russian novelists. The reading public's attention was drawn by the similarities between Schnitzler's stories and those of the modern French writers, particularly Maupassant, by Schnitzler's emphasis on the themes of love and death, by his 'poetic' use of language; it was, however, his depth of insight into human psychology above all for which he was most noted. It was indicative of the search for new directions in literature that not just Schnitzler but writers as diverse as Ibsen and Hofmannsthal all enjoyed a wide readership in Russia at this time.

Close cultural and commercial links between Austria-Hungary and Russia facilitated the dissemination of foreign literature. Parallels in their respective social structures meant that Russians could identify more easily with at least some of the situations presented in Schnitzler's works. Long established practices, - prostitution, duelling, anti-semitism, the military, moral corruption, and social hypocrisy, - issues which were close to Schnitzler, would have been as familiar to his Russian readers as to their Austrian counterparts. That is not to say, however, that social and political differences did not exist. The system of censorship in Austria, for example, differed from the Russian system. Austrian censors concerned themselves with upholding 'moral standards' (and prejudices), while their Russian counterparts saw anti-tsarist propaganda as the chief menace. Heresch argues that the reception of Schnitzler's works in Russia probably benefitted from a greater degree of moral permissiveness insofar as those works that were regarded with suspicion, even as 'Schmutzliteratur', in his own country, found easier access to the Russian public. The favourable reception

that Reigen won in Russia, for example, compared to the way it was received in Austria and Germany, is an indication of this.⁶⁵ It is interesting that native Russian literature is seldom anything approaching what we would call 'permissive'. The Russian public's affinity with Schnitzler's relatively 'explicit' work could thus be seen in terms of a desire for something analogous to the popular 'naughty French farce'. However, both countries thrived on a long artistic and literary tradition, and it was only when they became divided by political and ideological differences in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Great War, that identification with Schnitzler's predominantly 'bourgeois' characters and situations became more difficult for the Russian public.

Schnitzler was fortunate to have a number of Russian friends who not only kept him well informed about cultural developments in Russia, but who also helped to advance his standing abroad. The work of such critics, translators and personal friends as Zinaida and Isabella Vengerova, and Peter Rotenstern-Svesditsch, was invaluable in establishing and maintaining links with the Russian public. Komissarzhevskaja's highly acclaimed performances in several of Schnitzler's leading female roles, most notably as Christine in Liebelei, also helped to further the 'Verbreitung und Popularität dieses [Liebelei] und anderer Werke Schnitzlers in weiten Teilen des Landes' (Heresch, Arthur Schnitzler in Rußland,

⁶⁵Schnitzler's more politically sensitive works had a harder time, however. Meierkhol'd, for example, was refused permission to put on Der grüne Kakadu in Tiflis in March 1906. (See V.E.Meierkhol'd, Переписка 1896-1939, edited by IUrii A. Zavadskii (Moskva, 1976), p.365).

p.290).⁶⁶ Vogel remarks in her conclusion that Schnitzler's early successful reception in both Sweden and Russia was determined not only by the kind of personalities mentioned here, but also by favourable social circumstances:

Schnitzler wurde sehr schnell und sehr häufig ins Russische übersetzt, schon Anfang dieses Jahrhunderts erschienen Editionen seines bisherigen Gesamtwerks auf Russisch. In Rußland war Schnitzler damals sehr bekannt und zwar in erster Linie als Erzähler.[...]

Die Gesamtstruktur der Norm in Europa in dem zweiten Jahrzehnt dieses Jahrhunderts bot ähnliche und günstige Bedingungen für die Rezeption der Bühnenwerke Schnitzlers in verschiedenen Ländern. Für die Gesamtrezeption dagegen scheint die Struktur der nationalen Norm ausschlaggebend zu sein, darauf läßt sich zum größten Teil die Dominanz des Bühnendichters Schnitzler in Schweden bzw. des Erzählers Schnitzler in Rußland und der Sowjetunion zurückführen, andere Faktoren wie z.B. Fürsprecher und Übersetzer müssen daneben mit berücksichtigt werden. (Vogel, p.164)

3.2 Chekhov in Austria

On the whole, Chekhov's reception in Austria has been favourable,⁶⁷ although during his own lifetime his works achieved less of the kind of immediate and conspicuous success in Austria that marked Schnitzler's early reception in Russia. The story of Chekhov in Austria has not been one of consistent success, however. The popularity among German intellectuals of such writers as Turgenyev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and even Gorkiĭ militated

⁶⁶Komissarzhevskaja was personally acquainted with Chekhov. It would be interesting to speculate on the nature of her conversations with Chekhov about those plays, including Schnitzler's, in which she had roles.

⁶⁷Because of the close cultural, economic and social ties that have always existed between Austria and Germany, any discussion of Chekhov's reception in Austria cannot be entirely divorced from his reception in Germany.

against the early and full recognition of Chekhov's literary prowess.⁶⁸ Chekhov was for a long time underestimated, even misunderstood; what recognition he won as an accomplished writer of short stories was partially offset by the often cool reception of his later plays. Only since the second World War has Chekhov achieved the kind of consummate recognition that has long been associated with his name in countries like Britain, France and America. New editions of his works continue to be published⁶⁹ and in Vienna, as in other German-speaking cities of Europe, his plays are performed with increasing regularity. Unlike Schnitzler in the Soviet Union today, Chekhov is a household name in contemporary Austria.

3.2.1 Narrative Works

Chekhov was first introduced to his German-speaking readers, like Schnitzler to his Russian readers, by his short stories. The interest that Germans and Austrians showed in these was part of a general, growing interest in Russian realism that Chekhov's predecessors, especially Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy, had aroused.⁷⁰ When Chekhov became better known to the

⁶⁸Steinmetz argues, for example, that just as a man so versed in Russian literature as Thomas Mann came to know Chekhov's literature so late, it was evident 'daß auch in Österreich Tschechows Werke spät - sehr viel später als Tolstoi und selbst der jüngere Gorkii - bekannt wurden' (S.Steinmetz, 'Anton Tschechow in Wien', Zur 100. Wiederkehr des Geburtstages von Anton Pawlowitsh Tschechow, Mitteilungsblatt der Österreichischen-Sowjetischen Gesellschaft, 5(1960), 6).

⁶⁹The latest edition of Chekhov's complete works is a 'Diogenes' edition translated and edited by Peter Urban: Das dramatische Werk, 8 vols (Zürich, 1980); Das erzählerische Werk, 10 vols (Zürich, 1980); Briefe, 6 vols. (Zürich, 1983); Tagebücher: Notizbücher (Zürich, 1983).

⁷⁰See E.Hexelschneider, 'Über die Rezeption der russischen Literatur in Deutschland im letzten Viertel des 19.Jahrhunderts', in Begegnung und Bündnis, edited by Gerhardt Ziegenggeist (Berlin, 1972), pp.553-61 (p.557).

German-speaking public in the late 1880s and 1890s,⁷¹ he had already written a large number of stories and sketches. Instead of tackling the bulk of these, translators concentrated their efforts on Chekhov's newest and maturest works so that by the time of his death in 1904, almost half of the sixty or so stories Chekhov had written since 1887 had been translated into German. Many of the stories were translated more than once, some, like Дуэль, for instance, as often as five or six times during Chekhov's lifetime.⁷² By the turn of the century, Chekhov's popularity was growing all the time. Brauner may have been overstating the case when he writes that of the various Russian writers known abroad, 'ist keiner...so bekannt,...wird soviel gelesen, wie Anton Tschechow'⁷³, but his assertion, if a little premature, nevertheless points to the direction in which Chekhov's works were moving. Chekhov's popularity lay largely with the middle classes, the real-life counterparts of those characters who appear with greatest frequency in his work. The view that Chekhov's stories were more superficial than the literature of his literary predecessors was based on a knowledge of the lightweight stories of his earlier years. By comparison with these,

⁷¹In 1901, for example, Norden writes, 'Sehr bekannt dagegen ist schon seit einer längeren Reihe von Jahren Tschechow, der [...] für Deutschland erst vor bald 10 Jahren entdeckt wurde, wo zum ersten Male einzelne seiner Skizzen und Revüen zu erscheinen begannen' (J.Norden, 'Anton Tschechow und Maxim Gorki', Die Gegenwart, 36(1901), 153-56 (p.154)). Although Die Gegenwart was published in Berlin, most German periodicals were widely read in Austria.

⁷²The majority of his works appeared in German rather than Austrian newspapers and journals and it was only during and after the latter half of the 1890s that Chekhov's stories also began to appear in bound editions. Most were published in Berlin, Leipzig, Jena or Munich, because till then Austria had never boasted a properly flourishing publishing industry, but the wide availability of German publications in Austria ensured that Chekhov was as familiar among educated Austrian readers as he was among their German peers.

⁷³Alexander Brauner, 'Anton Tschechow', Die Zeit, no.170 (January 1898), 7-8 (p.7).

those of his later, more serious works which were available were still relatively unknown. This somewhat narrow view of Chekhov accounts in part for the complaint by some of the more discerning critics of his day that Chekhov was unjustly underestimated.⁷⁴ As Chekhov's maturer works became more widely available, however, appreciation of his literature broadened accordingly so that by 1902 he is seen to belong 'zu den am meisten gelesenen Autoren...- in Deutschland fast noch mehr als in Rußland...'⁷⁵.

Chekhov's works began to invite comparison in Austria and Germany with those of other contemporary or near contemporary European writers, particularly Gorkiĭ and Maupassant. At the turn of the century Gorkiĭ commanded an enthusiastic following in Austria and was often regarded favourably in comparisons with Chekhov.⁷⁶ Most critics agreed, however, that apart from nationality and contemporariness, both men shared few other close links. Gorkiĭ's literary style was emotive and rhetorical and appealed to the masses; Chekhov's was 'künstlerisch abgeklärter' and worked 'eindringlicher auf den

⁷⁴See, for example, Arthur Luther, 'Von den Moskauer Theatern', Bühne und Welt, I/18(1899), 845-47 (p.845).

⁷⁵Eduard Höber, 'Tschechhoff als Dramatiker', Das Litterarische Echo, 18(1902), cols.1287-88 (col.1287).

⁷⁶Flake, for instance, argues that both Chekhov and Gorkiĭ 'haben nur die Gleichzeitigkeit gemeinsam; Gorkij ist bei weitem der Größere. Ihn zu übersetzen lohnt sich, denn er ist ein voller Mensch, der geworden ist, während man sich doch fragen muß, ob das einen Zweck bei Tschechow hat' (Otto Flake, 'Zwei Russen', Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung, 23(1903), 180-81 (p.180)). Schnitzler himself favoured Chekhov, however. In an interview with Oskar Norvezheskiĭ, Schnitzler argues that Germans cannot appreciate fully the subtlety of Chekhov's art. They 'вот восторгаются Горким. А по-моему', Schnitzler continues, 'Горький куда ниже Чехова' (Oskar Norvezheskiĭ, 'Артур Шницлер', in Литературные силуэты (St.Petersburg, 1909), pp.61-69 (p.64)).

gebildeten Leser'⁷⁷. Chekhov, particularly the later Chekhov, was sometimes regarded as dull and bourgeois compared to Gorkiĭ.⁷⁸ It was indeed his later works, rather than his more light-hearted earlier works, that were often seen to exhibit the kind of pessimism which many regarded as typical of Russian literature in general.⁷⁹

Comparisons with Maupassant were even more common than with Gorky. Chekhov's and Maupassant's stories were seen to contain many parallels including range of theme, stylistic characteristics, psychological insights. For many educated German-speakers already familiar with the works of Maupassant, Chekhov made an obvious comparison, as did Schnitzler's work, exploring the mysteries of

⁷⁷Alexander von Gleichen-Rußwurm, 'Tschechow', Die Nation, 45 (1904), 714-15 (p.714). Chekhov himself had spoken of Gorkiĭ's 'verbose' style in a letter to him of 3 January 1899. The only flaw in Gorkiĭ's work, says Chekhov, is a lack of restraint and gracefulness. 'When', Chekhov continues, 'на какое-нибудь определенное действие человек затрачивает наименьшее количество движений, то это грация. В Ваших же затратах чувствуется излишество' (VIII, p.11).

⁷⁸Compare, again, Flake. Chekhov, he writes, 'zieht seine Bourgeois wohl auf, aber zuletzt findet er sich doch sehr wohl unter ihnen; seine Satire ist nicht bitter, sein Temperament nicht großzügig, sein Blut kocht nicht, wenn er schreibt; denn sein Schreiben ist kein Ausleben, sondern eine "feilende Filigranarbeit"' (Flake, p.180).

⁷⁹Zschorlich illustrates this point when, referring to Chekhov, Tolstoy, and Gorky, he writes of the 'Schmerz' that speaks 'aus ihrem Hohn und ihrer Leidenschaft', about the lack of 'Sonne', 'Freundlichkeit', and 'Behagen' in their works. (Paul Zschorlich, 'Anton Tschechow als Dramatiker', Neue Bahnen (1904), pp.445-46 (p.445)).

sexual passion and the human soul.⁸⁰ In view of this, it is surprising that more critics did not make the apparently logical connection between Schnitzler's works and Chekhov's. Chekhov, Schnitzler, and Maupassant alike, all made prominent use of the short-story genre, wrote uncomplicated prose, placed emphasis on the realistic presentation of human psychology, paid careful attention to detail, and illustrated a keen sense of social awareness. Of the three, Maupassant, being older and better known, was considered to be the superior writer.⁸¹ Chekhov's stories, as they appeared, aroused regular comment about their intrinsic 'Russian' qualities. These served either to alienate or to attract the German-speaking reader. The view that Chekhov's

⁸⁰Landsberg, for example, contends that, as a writer of stories, Schnitzler has 'eine starke Verwandtschaft mit Maupassant' (Hans Landsberg, Arthur Schnitzler (Berlin, 1904), p.39), while Specht refers to Schnitzler as 'ein Wiener Traum Guy de Maupassants' (Richard Specht, Arthur Schnitzler: Der Dichter und sein Werk (Berlin, 1922), p.342). More recently, Driver argues that 'traces of French influence can also be found in Schnitzler's earlier prose works. [...] In many of his prose works one can detect the same clear style, the same subtle psychology, and the same ironic twists as those in Maupassant' (Driver, p.57). Chekhov continues to invite comparison with Maupassant from critics and scholars. See, for instance, Zygmunt Rukalski, 'Anton Chekhov and Guy de Maupassant: Their Views on Life and Art', Slavic and East European Studies, 5(1961), 178-88. Grossman examines Maupassant's influence on Chekhov in Leonid Grossman, 'The Naturalism of Chekhov', in Chekhov: A Collection of Critical Essays, edited by Robert L. Jackson (New Jersey, 1967), pp.32-49. Wiese, too, claims, that with Chekhov and Maupassant 'erreichte das Zeitalter der europäischen Kurzgeschichte bereits seinen ersten Höhepunkt' (Benno von Wiese, Die Novelle (Stuttgart, 1963), p.82).

⁸¹Engelhardt, for instance, sees Chekhov as 'eine[n] Novellisten ersten Ranges..., der seinem französischen Meister Guy de Maupassant nicht allzu weit nachstand', and 'mit dem man ihn auch seiner ganzen Schreibweise nach am ehesten vergleichen muß', but concludes that 'der geniale Franzose dem Russen an Tiefe, an Fruchtbarkeit der Phantasie und an Schaffenskraft zweifellos überlegen ist' (Alexis von Engelhardt, 'Der russische Maupassant', Das Litterarische Echo (1898-99), cols.150-53 (col.150)).



works were 'durch und durch russisch'⁸² stemmed on the one hand from the scenes from Russian life depicted in them. The landscapes, the people, their institutions and practices, that Chekhov describes, were seen on one level to offer the western European reader a graphic insight into Russian life. Chekhov and his Russian roots, as Strauß points out, were inseparable:

Er stand zunächst durchaus auf nationalem Boden. Er malte die stillen Bilder seines weiten Vaterreiches, die russischen Tage und die russischen Nächte, die russischen Landschaften und die russischen Menschen. Schwere Schatten lasteten den nordischen Nebeln gleich auf allen diesen Gestalten, jedes Licht, jede Sonne fehlte. Tschechow knüpfte hier ganz direkt an Gogol oder Dostojewski an. Mit seinem scharfen Stifte vermochte er die Typen seines Volkes, den Schwärmer, den Verzweifelten, den Bauer wie den Polizisten, den Adeligen wie den Übelthäter, so plastisch vor uns vorzustellen, daß wir die starre Monotonie dieses russischen Lebens schwinden und tausend intime Nüancen hell vor uns aufschimmern sahen.⁸³

The element of local colour made Chekhov's stories interesting and appealing. On the other hand, the specifically Russian quality of Chekhov's literature was attributed to the 'melancholy' of his later works, which was found to be on the whole less appealing. Such melancholy, assumed by many to be an innate feature of the Slavic spirit, seemed to envelop Chekhov's works in an aura of gloom and pessimism which was sometimes

⁸²Carl Buße, 'Ein neuer russischer Dichter', Die Gegenwart, 25(1892), 392-93 (p.392).

⁸³Rudolph Strauß, 'Anton Tschechow', Die Wage, 18(1901), 285-86 (p.285).

difficult to digest.⁸⁴

The view of Chekhov as a writer inseparable from his Russian background persisted for a long time and to some extent still holds today. Nevertheless, many critics also paid due attention to what they saw as Chekhov's sensitive perception of universal humanity.⁸⁵ Chekhov's insights into the human condition and the broad scope of his art in general, attracted increasing attention as his maturer, more 'serious' stories became better known. Less and less was he looked upon as a writer whose works were characterised solely by national traits.

By his death in 1904, Chekhov's name was familiar to most German-speakers. His works were generally popular and he himself, as one of several foreign writers whom

⁸⁴'Hysterisch, vom Weltschmerz und Menschenhaß geplagt, vom Geiste der Analyse, von der Sucht zur Reflexion angefressen' is the way Düsel, for instance, describes the Russian intelligentsia. The Slavic national character is just as much responsible for this, he contends, as exterior conditions in Russian life. The unmistakable pathological strain in Russian literature, Düsel continues, finds its expression in 'tiefer Schwermut und fast hoffnungslosem Pessimismus. Kein Wunder, daß eine schwächliche, tatenunlustige, in schmerzlicher Reflexion oder bitterer Satire sich bewegende Halbheit und Schlaffheit die russische Intelligenz und damit auch ihre Dichter kennzeichnet' (Friedrich Düsel, 'Dramatische Rundschau', Westermans Illustrierte Deutsche Monatshefte, 97(October 1904-March 1905), 448-51 (p.448)). Engelhardt shares this view: 'Überhaupt läßt sich der Pessimismus von dem Begriffe "Russische Literatur" nicht mehr trennen' (Alexsis von Engelhardt, 'Anton Tschechow', Aus fremden Zungen, 9(1899), 334-36, (p.336)). Engelhardt further argues that this 'hoffnungslose[r] Pessimismus' has its origin 'in der russischen Kultur- oder vielmehr Halbkulturzuständen...Nicht die Erzähler', he says, 'schaffen den Pessimismus, sondern die Zustände' ('Der russische Maupassant', col.151). Elsewhere, he describes these conditions as 'die gesellschaftlichen und staatlichen Mißstände, an denen Rußland bis ins Mark hinein krankt' ('Anton Tschechow', p.336).

⁸⁵Strauss, for instance, praises Chekhov's ability to be a 'durchaus nationale[r] Dichter' and a 'europäischer, weltweiser Literat' at one and the same time. 'Das merkwürdig Feine an Anton Tschechow', says Strauss, is that 'ihm eine Art schöpferische Synthese zwischen Nationalismus und Internationalismus gelang' (Rudolph Strauss, Anton Tschechow (1901), p.285).

educated readers read with interest, was respected and admired. Admiration, however, was warm rather than impassioned. Consistent with the general decline in realism that was taking place in Europe in the early years of the twentieth century, interest in Chekhov after the revolution of 1905, as Dick points out, began to wane.⁸⁶ New editions of Chekhov's works, the majority published in Germany, continued to appear with a degree of regularity, however, so that by the 1920s most of his works were readily available.⁸⁷

The growth of Nazism in Austria and Germany during the 1930s coincided with a second decline in interest in Chekhov that simultaneously paralleled the downward trend of Schnitzler's fortunes in the Soviet Union. Since the end of the Second World War, however, there has been something of a Chekhov revival in Austria and Germany. The number of new German editions of his works has risen, as has the number of performances of his plays. This 'renaissance' has been accompanied by a reevaluation of Chekhov's works. No longer is Chekhov seen so much as an essentially pessimistic writer, more as an acutely sensitive observer of the human condition. Dick argues that since the creation of the two Germanies, the reception of Chekhov's works in East Germany has been swifter and more thorough than in West Germany, (Dik, Чехов в Германии, pp.90-91). East German publishers and critics, says Dik, have concentrated on Chekhov's sociocritical works, В овраге, for example, Случай из

⁸⁶ 'После революции 1905г в России интерес к Чехову и вообще к реалистической русской литературе в Германии повсеместно начал спадать' (Gerhard Dik, 'Чехов в Германии'. Научные доклады высшей школы, 4(1960), 90-91 (p.90)). It was, he continues, only after the end of the First World War that German interest in Russian literature began to revive.

⁸⁷ By comparison, it was not until 1925 that Zsolnay Verlag of Vienna brought out three new Chekhov collections. Die Tragödie auf dem Jagd, Der schwarze Mönch, Anjuta (Wien, 1925).

практики, Палата но.6 and others, in contrast to an emphasis on his humorous stories and those with a religious setting in the West. There are differences of interpretation too, from the Western image of Chekhov 'как пессимистического описателя нравов, который отчаивается в жизни и хочет с помощью горького юмора заглушить чувство безысходности' (Dik, p.91), to the East German view of him 'как художник, сознающий всю глубину своей ответственности перед людьми, как активный гуманист' (ibid.). As we would expect, Chekhov is praised more in the East for his optimistic outlook on the future and for the humanistic direction of his work.

3.2.2 Dramatic Works

The early reception of Chekhov's dramas in Austria was restrained compared with that of his stories.⁸⁸ His early one-act comedies, Предложение and Медведь were the main exceptions, however. Josef Jarno, artistic director of the Theater in der Josefstadt during the early years of the century and champion of little-known playwrights, had introduced Chekhov the dramatist to the Viennese public with productions of Der Heiratsantrag and Der Bär in 1901 and 1903 respectively. Unlike his longer, more serious plays, these short comedies won instant popularity⁸⁹ and have remained in the Viennese theatre repertoire ever since.

⁸⁸Shakh-Azizova, for instance, contends that during his life-time Chekhov's plays never received 'такого общеевропейского резонанса, как драматургия Ибсена или Гауптманна' (Shakh-Azizova, p.22). She goes on to contrast that situation with the huge influence that Chekhov continues to have on world theatre today.

⁸⁹See, for instance, O.-L., in Arbeiter Zeitung, 7 November 1903, p.9. The critic writes of Chekhov's 'vollblütigem Humor' in Der Bär. The play, he continues, is 'national und allgemein menschlich, und dennoch ganz individuell, geistreich, witzig - verblüffend wie die Natur'.

Chekhov's full-length plays did not fare so well, however. A production of Onkel Wanja on 10 April 1906 at the 'Intimes Theater' was, it seems, the first Viennese performance of any of Chekhov's full-length plays. Ironically, the public had the opportunity of seeing the same play a week later in a production by the MAT on their first European tour⁹⁰. In terms of the number of pre-Second World War productions, however, Die Möwe fared worse. The Berliner Hebbeltheater performed it at the Volkstheater as part of their Viennese tour in June 1909, but the play had to wait until 1952 for its first production by a Viennese company⁹¹. A wartime production of Der Kirschgarten at the Neue Wiener Bühne in October 1916 introduced to the Viennese public what has arguably become Chekhov's most popular play in Austria. Apart from two further productions of the play, however, (one by the MAT in April 1921, the other, a private showing by the Wiener Verein zur Förderung literarisch-dramatischer Kunst at the 'Literarische Bühne' in January 1927), it was not until 1948 that Der Kirschgarten received its next Austrian performance⁹². Drei Schwestern suffered similarly from lack of attention during the first half of the century. The Moscow Arts Theatre performed it in Vienna in 1921; this was followed by a production at the Wiener Komödie Theater in September 1928, and thereafter at the Theater in der Josefstadt in October 1940. Productions of Chekhov's plays received varying reviews from the critics. Nevertheless, the relatively small number of pre-Second World War productions by comparison

⁹⁰The MAT performed the only subsequent pre-Second World War production of the play in April 1921 at the Theater in der Josefstadt. Even today Onkel Wanja remains the least performed of Chekhov's mature plays. In the ensuing survey, only performances up until 1984 have been taken into account.

⁹¹Die Möwe, 14 May 1952, Akademietheater, Wien.

⁹²Der Kirschgarten, April 1948, Theater in der Josefstadt.

with, for example, those in Britain, was evidence of the fact that the initial impact of Chekhov's full-length plays on the Austrian theatre-going public was less marked than that of his stories.

Artistic rather than political factors accounted for this situation. The generally more pessimistic nature of Chekhov's plays did not always find favour with his Austrian public.⁹³ What Chekhov's audiences saw as his Impressionistic, psychological, and visually static dramas failed to satisfy the traditional theatrical tastes of the Viennese public.⁹⁴ For many, Chekhov's characters lacked dynamism, their lives were boring, their conflicts petty, and although this facet of Chekhovian drama was not universally regarded as a

⁹³Höber, for instance, argues that the 'pessimistische Grundanschauung' of Chekhov's stories is diminished by the degree of scorn and irony with which Chekhov views his character. In the plays, however, 'tritt sie...völlig unabgeschwächt zu Tage' (Höber, col.1396). Чайка, Дядя Ваня and Три сестры, he goes on, are all variations on the same theme: lonely, dissatisfied people who fail to grasp the fleeting opportunities for happiness.

⁹⁴Steinmetz argues that traditional Viennese tastes demanded plays 'mit reicher Handlung... Da mußte', he goes on to explain, 'Tschechows intimes, impressionistisches Theaterschaffen, mit den nur zart angedeuteten Konflikten in der Seele der handelnden Personen, zunächst unverstanden bleiben' (Steinmetz, pp.8-9). Krause observes the same reaction among German audiences. Germans, he argues, were not used either to the 'Mangel an äußerer Handlung' of Chekhov's plays or to the 'Geisteshaltung des Unbefriedigtseins, des Sich-Treiben-Lassens' of Chekhov's characters, typified in most cases, in Krause's view, by loneliness, dissatisfaction, lethargy and 'Weltschmerz'. Chekhov's plays amounted to a 'Poesie des Morbiden und der Resignation' (Hans-Harro Krause, 'Die vorrevolutionären russischen Dramen auf der deutschen Bühne' (PhD dissertation, Emsdetten, 1972), p.102).

weakness,⁹⁵ in terms of general entertainment, Chekhov's 'actionless' plays tended to disappoint the expectations of the Viennese theatre-goer. As Grüner-Trautenau openly admits, 'wir [German-speakers] lieben keine ausgedehnten...Exkursionen im Theater, die Tat soll es sein, nicht das Wort'.⁹⁶

The success of the two MAT visits to Vienna in 1906 and 1921 contrasted strongly with the otherwise muted response to Chekhov's plays prior to the Second World War. Chekhov had always been a favourite of the company, not only because of their previous close personal ties, but also because his plays encouraged a naturalistic style of acting which reflected the aims of the theatre's artistic directors, Stanislavskii and Nemirovich-Danchenko, on founding the company. The MAT won great acclaim on both their visits to Vienna, particularly for their performances of Chekhov⁹⁷. On each occasion the language of the original did little to obstruct the enjoyment of the non-Russian audience. Ironically, the melancholic atmosphere and the 'lack of drama' appealed greatly. Auernheimer, for example, writes of the 1906 Дядя Ваня:

⁹⁵Otto Stoeßl, for instance, focuses on the vacuous lives of Chekhov's characters in his plays and the mood of 'Verzweiflung, ohnmächtigen Zornes, düsterer Resignation, hilflosen Pathos, demüthiger Schickung' which he conjures up. Chekhov's plays, says Stoeßl, are typified by 'Zersetzung, Auflösung, also negative Handlung', by an 'auflösende, schwächende Verzweiflung,...ein schlaffes Hinsinken' and it is just this which is 'das sonderbar Dramatische dieser scheinbar so undramatischen Szenen' (Otto Stoeßl, review of 'Anton Tschechhoff Dramen "Onkel Wanja", "Die Moewe", "Drei Schwestern"' (Leipzig, 1902), Die Wage, 25(1902), p.403).

⁹⁶Ferdinand Grüner-Trautenau, 'Neue Dramen', Literarische Warte, 3(1902), 532-36 (p.536).

⁹⁷The MAT's programme during the 1906 tour included Chekhov's Дядя Ваня, Alexei Tolstoy's Цар Фёдор Иоаннович, and Gorky's На дне. In 1921, they performed three Chekhov plays: Дядя Ваня, Три сестры and Вишнёвый сад.

Nirgends der Berg eines Ereignisses, von der Gebirgskette einer geschlossenen Handlung gar nicht zu reden: ein paar Menschen die sich schlecht vertragen und schließlich unter Tränen von einander scheiden. Aber die Menschen sind echt und die Tränen sind echt und darum fallen sie uns allen so heiß aufs Herz. Dieser "Onkel Wanja" in der russischen Darstellung ist ein unvergeßliches theatralisches Erlebnis...; ein Meisterstück der theatralischen Kunst überhaupt, wie man es kaum jemals noch erlebt hat.⁹⁸

Only the Russians, it seemed, could capture the essence of Chekhov's plays, only they could overcome what had often been regarded as the characteristic colourlessness of Chekhovian theatre, only they could bring to life the 'russische Volksseele'.⁹⁹ The success of the MAT's performances in Vienna drew attention to Chekhov as a dramatist and increased his standing as a literary figure, although any lasting influence this had on his subsequent reception in Austria was relatively small. A practical grasp of Chekhovian theatre continued to elude even the most talented of German-speaking artists; convincing productions of Chekhov comparable to those by

⁹⁸Raoul Auernheimer, 'Onkel Wanja', NFP, 17 April 1906, p.12. Auernheimer was no less enthusiastic about the MAT in 1921: 'Die Regiekunst der Russen', he wrote, 'ist eine durchaus dichterische; sie gibt nicht nur das Atmosphärische des Stückes wieder, sie macht auch noch das Seelische sichtbar' (Raoul Auernheimer, 'Drei Schwestern', NFP, 10 April 1921, p.10).

⁹⁹'Die tiefe Melancholie der russischen Volksseele', says Kienzl, 'haben nun die Moskauer Darsteller in einer Vollkommenheit ausgeschöpft, die sich so wenig hier beschreiben läßt, als sie deutsche Schauspieler nachzuahmen imstande wären' (Hermann Kienzl, 'Das Moskauer Künstlerische Theater', Das Blaubuch, 1(1906), 418-24 (pp.423-424)). Scheyer's praise is equally flattering: 'Tschechows Gestalten werden von den Moskauern nicht 'gespielt': sie sind. Man spürt keine Technik mehr, keinen Stil, keine Regie, mit einem Wort kein Theater' (M.Scheyer, 'Drei Schwestern', Neues Wiener Tagblatt, 10 April 1921, p.12). Poppenberg argues that the great skill of the Russians was 'unsere Nerven gefügig für jede seiner Stimmungen zu machen'. To Poppenberg, the performance amounted to a 'Gesamtkunstwerk' in which lies 'die Zukunft der künstlerischen Schaubühne' (Felix Poppenberg, 'Russisches Theater', Der Türmer (June 1906), pp.381-85, (p.384)).

the MAT were rare.

Since the end of the second World War, Chekhov's reputation in Austria has grown just as it has grown throughout the world. The increase in the number of Austrian stage-productions of Chekhov is one indication of this. The realisation that Chekhov's works extend beyond the immediate confines of the Russian nineteenth century and touch on the timelessness and universality of human experience is now widely accepted. The novelty of Chekhov's 'impressionistic' theatre has had time to establish itself over the years and what seemed unfamiliar to a Viennese audience in the early part of the century has become standard in the light of new dramatic styles and techniques. Chekhov's plays remain, however, of relatively limited popularity in Austria. Bednarz concludes that the

steigende Zahl der Inszenierungen und die relativ hohen Aufführungsziffern der letzten Jahre dürfen nicht darüber hinwegtäuschen, daß bis heute in vielen Fällen Bühne und Publikum in gleicher Weise ratlos den großen dramatischen Werken dieses Dichters gegenüberstehen.¹⁰⁰

Nevertheless, German translations of Chekhov's works have been readily available ever since the last decade or so of the nineteenth century. The reason for the popularity of his stories over his later plays lay partly with the appeal of the stories themselves and partly with the difficulty audiences had in responding to the 'pessimism' and 'actionlessness' of his dramas. Despite widespread admiration for Chekhov's human insight and grasp of dramatic technique, it was the 'Problem der

¹⁰⁰Klaus Bednarz, 'Theatralische Aspekte der Dramenübersetzung am Beispiel Anton Tschechows' (PhD dissertation, University of Vienna, 1965), p.125.

Mentalität' (Bednarz, p.128),¹⁰¹ that proved to be the biggest obstacle to a full appreciation of his dramatic art.¹⁰² In addition, Bednarz emphasises the damaging effect that poor translations had on Chekhov's early reception:

Gerade die mangelnde künstlerische Qualität der Übersetzungen aber, ihre 'Theaterfremdheit' und ihr Unverständnis den schauspielerischen und dramaturgischen Elementen der Cechovschen Sprachgestaltung gegenüber, dürfte eine der Ursachen für den bisher so unbefriedigenden Verlauf der Bühnengeschichte Cechows im deutschsprachigen Raum sein; - nicht die einzige, aber eine weit bedeutungsvollere, als bisher angenommen. (Bednarz, p.130)

Thomas Mann sees Chekhov's modesty as one reason for his 'langjährige Unterschätztheit in Westeuropa und sogar auch in Rußland'. It has, Mann continues, to do with his

...äußerst nüchternen, kritischen und zweifelnden Verhalten zu sich selbst, der Unzufriedenheit, mit der er auf seine Leistung blickte, kurz mit seiner 'Bescheidenheit',...die so überaus sympathisch, aber nicht danach angetan war, die Welt zu bestimmen, hoch und groß von ihm zu denken...¹⁰³

It is also conceivable that some of Chekhov's readers would have been disappointed in their expectations of his later works, for it was essentially as a humourist that Chekhov first became known to his Austrian readership. Readers with preconceptions based on these light-hearted

¹⁰¹Audience structures, the question of contemporary tastes, and the quality of productions were other factors, according to Bednarz, that contributed to the poor reception of Chekhov's longer plays (Bednarz, p.128).

¹⁰²Like Bednarz, Krause argues that 'die Darstellung einer reinen atmosphärischen Melancholie...in den meisten Fällen das Publikum nicht an[sprach]'. He concludes by stressing that the high demands made by Chekhov's plays on German actors were an important factor in the dearth of 'vollkommene[r] Tschechow-Interpretation[en]' (Krause, p.122).

¹⁰³Thomas Mann, 'Versuch über Tschechow', in Nachlese: Prosa 1951-1955 (Frankfurt am Main, 1956), pp.29-56 (p.30).

stories would have been disappointed by the 'melancholy' of his later works. The fact, however, that Chekhov's works were widely known in both Austria and Germany from an early stage in his career and have remained available in German ever since, is a mark of some considerable achievement. There can be no doubt that even in the early years of the century, Chekhov was successful; it is only the degree of that success which is debatable.

3.2.3 Chekhov and his Austrian Contemporaries

Despite the fact that Chekhov is rarely mentioned in their correspondence, the members of Jung Wien, the group with which Schnitzler himself was most closely associated, were almost certainly acquainted with Chekhov's work.¹⁰⁴ We may assume from our knowledge of their personal relations and interests that they would very likely have discussed Chekhov's works as they appeared. The occasional, casual reference to Chekhov by Hofmannsthal and Auernheimer, for example, suggests a general familiarity with his works.¹⁰⁵ Chekhov, however, never met any of the group on his trip to Vienna in March 1891, and there is little to suggest that his presence in Vienna would have had much of an impact, even if it had been widely publicised.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Such figures as Bahr, Schnitzler, Beer-Hofmann, and Hofmannsthal, all belonged to the social group of middle-class intellectuals who habitually read the type of journals and newspapers in which Chekhov's works appeared. From 1892, Bahr himself coedited one such weekly, Die Zeit.

¹⁰⁵In a postcard to Schnitzler written in September 1904, Hofmannsthal notes: 'Wir sind brav und haben uns...einiges von Tschekow gekauft' (Hugo von Hofmannsthal-Arthur Schnitzler, Briefwechsel, edited by Therese Nickl and Heinrich Schnitzler (Frankfurt am Main, 1983 (1964)), p.202). For Auernheimer's references to Chekhov, see above.

¹⁰⁶Enthusiasm regarding any news there may have been about Chekhov's attendance in Vienna would undoubtedly have been eclipsed by the general anticipation surrounding Ibsen's forthcoming visit to Vienna, scheduled for the following month.

Of Bahr's literary associates, however, Altenberg is one of the few who make more than just a cursory mention of Chekhov. In one of the sketches from Wie ich es sehe, one of the characters discusses Chekhov's merits as a miniaturist writer:

"Kennen Sie A.Tschechow?" sagte er. "Der ist außerordentlich, ein Genie!..." [...]
Der junge Mann sagte: "Mein A.Tschechow! Mit wenigem viel sagen, das ist es! Die weiseste Ökonomie bei tiefster Fülle, das ist auch beim Künstler alles - - wie beim Menschen. Auch der Mensch ist ein Künstler, sollte es sein - - ein 'Lebenskünstler'! Die Japaner machen eine Blütenzweige, und es ist der ganze Frühling. Bei uns malen sie den ganzen Frühling, und es ist kaum ein Blütenzweig. Weise Ökonomie ist alles! Und dann, sehen Sie - - - die feinste Empfänglichkeit haben für Form, Farben, Düfte ist schön. Dieses dem anderen so beibringen, daß er ebenso spürt, ist eine Kunst."¹⁰⁷

Significantly, Altenberg sees in Chekhov's laconic style a special affinity with his own miniaturist literary method. That Chekhov is mentioned only rarely in Karl Kraus's journal Die Fackel is largely due to an editorial policy that favoured Austrian letters above all else. The few references there are to Chekhov reveal little about Kraus's own views on Chekhov, but they do illustrate something of the strain of satirical humour to be found in the journal.¹⁰⁸

It was Rilke, however, who had most to do with Chekhov directly. Born in Prague in 1875, Rilke was neither a member of Jung Wien nor one of Schnitzler's close

¹⁰⁷Peter Altenberg, 'Der Besuch', in Wie ich es sehe (1896), in Sonnenuntergang im Präter (Stuttgart, 1968), pp.31-32.

¹⁰⁸For example, Kraus gives us this anecdote about Chekhov: 'In einem Brief, den Anton Tschechow über einen Aufenthalt in Wien geschrieben hat, soll der Satz vorkommen: "O, meine Freunde, wenn ihr nun wüßtet, wie schön Wien ist!...Die Straßen sind breit, schön gepflastert"....' (Karl Kraus, 'Ein sonderbarer Schwärmer', Die Fackel, 196(1909/10), 46). See Chekhov's letter of 20 March 1891 (Russian calendar) to his family, (IV, pp.199-200).

literary associates, yet both men were interested in each other's works and corresponded with each other between 1896 and 1902.¹⁰⁹ After a visit to Russia in 1899 with Lou Andreas-Salomé, (herself the daughter of a German-Russian general), Rilke developed a deep interest in Russia and began to acquaint himself with the language, the literature, and the culture of the Russian people. It was as part of this interest that Rilke sought in 1900 to provide the German public with a translation of Chekhov's Чайка.¹¹⁰ Rilke also wrote to Chekhov directly asking for Russian editions of Чайка and Дядя Ваня, which were apparently hard to come by in Western Europe.¹¹¹ Rilke sets out his views on Чайка in two letters to Sophia Schill written in March 1900. In the second of these written on 16 March, Rilke refers specifically to the danger of monotony in the play:

Sie dürfen auch nicht glauben, daß mir die 'Tschaika' unlieb geworden ist oder daß ich bereut habe, mich an ihr bemüht zu haben. Ich bin überzeugt, daß der Eindruck, den Sie schildern, dem meinen sehr ähnlich wäre, wenn es mir vergönnt gewesen wäre, das Stück auf dem Moskauer Theater zu sehen. Dort hat es gewiß stark gewirkt, und alle seine Vorzüge kamen bei einem verständnisvollen Spiel jedenfalls so zu Geltung, daß seine Mängel nicht Raum hatten, sich deutlich zu machen. Ich stimme mit Ihnen ganz darin überein, daß Tschechow jedesfalls ein moderner Künstler ist, wenn er die Absicht hat, die Tragödien des Alltags mit ihrer banalen Breite, hinter welcher die großen Katastrophen sich entwickeln, künstlerisch darzustellen. [...]
Aber wenn es schon Not tut, das Leben des Alltags

¹⁰⁹See Arthur Schnitzler-Rainer Maria Rilke, 'Ihr Briefwechsel', edited by Heinrich Schnitzler, Wort und Wahrheit, XIII (1958), 283-98.

¹¹⁰See Rilke's letter to Sofia N. Schill of 23 February 1900 in Ingeborg Schnack, Rainer Maria Rilke: Chronik seines Lebens und seines Werkes (Passau, 1975), p.97.

¹¹¹Letter to Chekhov of 5 March 1900, cited in Schnack, p.98. Whether or not Chekhov ever replied to this letter has not been established.

auf der Szene darzustellen, mit allen seinen Kleinlichkeiten und konventionellen Gebärden, leeren Worten, langweiligen Spielen und den abgeschmackten Falschheiten des täglichen Verkehrs, so müssen doch alle diese Erscheinungen auf der Bühne von den tatsächlichen Vorgängen, denen sie nachgemacht sind, sich durch das Tempo ihrer Entwicklung unterscheiden. Denken Sie nur: der Alltag, wie er wirklich vor sich geht, rechnet auf ein Leben und läßt sich Zeit, - der Alltag auf der Szene muß in einem Abend sich vollenden.¹¹²

Rilke was here replying to Schill's enquiries about objections that Rilke had raised in his letter of 5 March concerning Chekhov's characterisation. Rilke was sure, however, that what he saw as the play's failings was primarily a question of national temperament. The play, he felt, was sure to succeed in Russia:

Einer Aufführung ist die 'Tschaika' ja wohl wert, aber sie ist nicht geeignet, einen Dichter bei einem fremden Volke als Dramatiker einzuführen. Ich persönlich habe freilich sehr den Wunsch, das Stück in Moskau auf dem Theater zu sehen: ich bin überzeugt, daß es dort nicht versagt. (Letter to Sofia N.Schill, 5 March 1900, in Rilke, Briefe, p.29)

It is interesting that Rilke's reservations about the suitability of Chekhov's longer plays to a German-speaking audience proved well-founded in the subsequent reception of his works.

To sum up, Schnitzler's early reception in Russia was more conspicuous than Chekhov's in Austria for a variety of social, political and cultural reasons. His popularity was reflected in the number of early editions of his works and in the number of productions of his plays, both of which were far in excess of what Schnitzler himself could have hoped for. Chekhov's introduction into Austria and Germany was more gradual

¹¹²Rainer Maria Rilke, Briefe und Tagebücher 1899-1902 (Leipzig, 1931), pp.32-33.

although his standing has never been in any real doubt. Translations of his early stories earned him widespread recognition, while his maturer works, particularly the longer 'melancholic' plays, elicited a more ambiguous response.

During the period from the early 1930s to the mid 1960s when Schnitzler's works disappeared altogether from Russia, Chekhov's continued to arouse steady interest. The past two decades have witnessed a growth of interest in both Chekhov and Schnitzler in the other's country, though the renewed interest in Schnitzler shown by critics in the Soviet Union does not easily compare with that shown by Western critics. Chekhov's revival in Austria has been more evident, yet the recent increase in the number of Chekhov productions disguises the difficulties German-speaking audiences continue to have in understanding Chekhov fully. Where, today, Chekhov has become a major figure in world literature, Schnitzler remains very much an Austrian writer with limited appeal. In the Soviet Union, this situation is exacerbated by a political environment adversely disposed to the kind of literature that Schnitzler's work represents. During their own lifetime, however, conditions were very different; then, both men commanded comparable attention and respect in each other's countries.

CHAPTER 4

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDICINE

Medicine played an undisputed role in the lives of Chekhov and Schnitzler. It was the common factor that linked two men separated by nationality, class and creed, making their experiences in life less disparate than they otherwise might have been, and their understanding of humanity at large equally deep. The influence of medicine on their literature is unmistakable, and accounts for many of the affinities that we can trace in their works. Whilst bearing in mind the differences in the cultural traditions of Russia and Austria-Hungary, in the medical conditions which obtained in both countries, and the implications that these had for general attitudes towards medicine, it is to these influences and affinities that this chapter seeks to address itself.

4.1 Medicine in Late Nineteenth Century Europe

The latter part of the nineteenth century was a time of social and technological change throughout Europe. The growing acceptance of Darwinism had helped to create a climate for scientific and industrial development, and had nurtured the growth of a new sense of optimism and radicalism.¹¹³ In Russia, the reforms of Alexander II, particularly the Emancipation of the serfs in 1861, and the creation of the zemstvos in 1864, heralded the beginning of a new era. The zemstvos, largely elected from among the ranks of the upper-middle class and the nobility, had responsibility for administering certain key areas of local community life such as education, health, and public amenities. The jurisdiction of the

¹¹³Discussing the growth of Darwinism in Russia and the West, Tulloch asserts that Darwin was held in great esteem, that his major works were quickly translated, and that his evolutionary theories provided the mainstay of the 'materialistically inclined intelligentsia' (John Tulloch, Chekhov: A Structuralist Study (London, 1980), pp.88-89).

zemstvos was nevertheless limited, and did not extend to all areas of public and political life. Real power continued to reside in the hands of the tsarist autocracy. Medicine, however, was one of the administrative responsibilities of the zemstvos least affected by central control. Conscious of their independent status, medical practitioners, (like Chekhov, many country doctors also had a place on the local council), developed a heightened sense of social responsibility. Believing that physical infirmity and social adversity were closely related, doctors had not only a medical but a social role to play in alleviating the poverty, the ignorance and suffering they saw around them. Attention to social problems reflected the importance doctors attached to preventive medicine and the need to tackle illness at source. Zakhar'in, an eminent professor at the University of Moscow in the latter years of the nineteenth century, was one of the prime movers of the concept of 'milieu as a source of illness' (Tulloch p.92), being convinced that 'changing a milieu which was unfavourable to an organism's functional strength was the first step in restoring its equilibrium' (ibid). Chekhov himself believed in this broader role of medicine, having formulated his own medical views under the influence of such influential scientists as Zakhar'in himself, Ostroumov, and Pirogov. He adopted their concern with prophylaxis, public welfare and hygiene, evidence of which we see in his lifelong concern with wide ranging social issues.¹¹⁴ Chekhov effectively underlines the relationship between environment and illness in stories such as Случай из практики, where one of the main causes

¹¹⁴Tulloch stresses this point when he writes that Chekhov, 'following Ostroumov,...emphasised, not a fatalistic [Tulloch's emphasis] heredity as did Morel, Nordau and Lombroso in the West, but the fundamental importance of social and environmental factors which could be changed through better hygiene, better education, and social reform' (Tulloch, p.93).

of Liza's nervous state of mind is the oppressive factory environment in which she lives. As the factory-owner's privileged daughter, her nervousness is exacerbated by feelings of guilt.

The preventive approach to medicine, with its implicit emphasis on social reform, was based on a reading of Darwinism that held to the belief that human beings had an active part to play in the evolutionary process. In his plays and stories, Chekhov conforms to the free-will point of view that personal development, as well as degeneration, are in the hands of the individual. Nadia in Невеста, for example, makes a conscious move to escape from her philistine environment in order to begin what she hopes will be a more fulfilling life elsewhere. Vera, in В родном углу, has the choice of marrying Neshchapov or leaving home to escape the petty-mindedness entailed by domestic life. Startsev, in Ионыч, disillusioned early in his career by Kitty's rejection of his offer of marriage, fails to resist the forces of complacency and mediocrity which this disillusion induces and which is typical of the provincial environment that surrounds him, and succumbs willingly to a life of selfish materialism that combines personal comforts with decreasing professional standards. The tragedy of so many of Chekhov's characters is that although they have it within their power to determine their destiny and improve their lot, they rarely meet the challenge.

The view of Darwinism which invested power and responsibility in the individual, with its 'symbiosis' between man, the natural and social worlds' (Tulloch, p.89), contrasted with the essentially fatalistic reading of Darwin in the West which saw man as the victim of evolutionary forces outwith his control. This western fatalism was reflected in the phenomenon of 'therapeutic nihilism' in which Western, particularly Viennese, medicine had become entrenched. Where Pirogov, Ostroumov,

Zakhar'in and others in Russia stressed the importance of the prevention of disease through therapy and social reform, Western practitioners tended to see their role as one of simple diagnosis. A fascination with observation led to neglect in therapy and in general patient care.¹¹⁵ The prevailing attitude encouraged a highly academic interest in medicine, whereby post-mortems became a matter of greater seriousness and importance to the theoretically-minded medics than actual treatment.

Vienna, however, as Janik and Toulmin point out¹¹⁶, was still the 'medical center of the world' at the turn of the century. The city prided itself on a long and illustrious medical tradition, and had a reputation that attracted scientists from all over Europe and America. In spite of this, the preoccupation with diagnosis precipitated a spirit of neglect that reflected itself in some institutions in a shortage of properly trained nurses and assistants, and in poor standards of hygiene. The Viennese surgeon Theodor Billroth attempted to remedy the situation by founding a school for nurses in 1891¹¹⁷, and by bringing to public awareness the importance of hygiene and competence in medical care. His efforts were part of a process that saw a steady improvement in medical conditions in Vienna and elsewhere.

¹¹⁵Johnston makes a connection between the attitude to disease and similar attitudes towards language and politics in Vienna at the time. While such people as Otto Weininger, Karl Kraus, and Ludwig Wittgenstein 'embodied the conviction that diseases of society and language defy curing', 'refusal by nineteenth-century physicians to intervene in natural processes', Johnston argues, 'paralleled the reluctance of many Austrians to participate in politics' (William M. Johnston, The Austrian Mind: An Intellectual and Social History, 1848-1938 (Berkeley California, 1972), p.223, pp.228-89).

¹¹⁶Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, Wittgenstein's Vienna (New York, 1973), p.35.

¹¹⁷'Der Rudolphiner-Verein zur Erbauung und Erhaltung eines Pavillon-Krankenhauses behufs Heranbildung von Pflegerinnen für Kranke und Verwundete in Wien'.

As a product of his environment, Schnitzler was also influenced by this general interest in diagnosis. Both as doctor and as writer, Schnitzler's role is that of observer of human psychology and of society at large. In Nehring's words, he is 'the diagnosing physician feeling the pulse of society'¹¹⁸. His characters, victims of such inexorable natural forces as love and death with little control over their own destinies, are the creation of a man influenced by a fatalistic reading of Darwin. The process of degeneration, which Chekhov believed could be effectively combatted through proper education and a sense of purpose (See Hingley, chapter three), was, to Schnitzler, a relentless and inevitable process, as illustrated in two of his early stories, Der Sohn and Reichtum. In the former, a young man's attempt at matricide is accepted by the victim as an act of hereditarily determined necessity. In the latter, a compulsive gambler falls victim to the same process of mental degeneration as his father. To many of Schnitzler's characters, fate presents itself as a source of bewilderment. Where Chekhov's characters see themselves as responsible for the situations in which they find themselves, Schnitzler's are perturbed and perplexed by the unfolding of a destiny that remains outside their sphere of influence.¹¹⁹ Von Umprecht in Die Weissagung is frightened of the power that supernatural forces appear to have over him. In Die dreifache Warnung, the youth expresses intense despair as he realises his battle with fate is lost:

¹¹⁸Wolfgang Nehring, 'Schnitzler, Freud's Alter Ego?', MAL, X/iii-iv(1977), 179-94 (p.187).

¹¹⁹Evlakhov, a Russian critic of the 1920s, was one of the first to recognise this. In essence, he writes, all of Schnitzler's works are 'полны скрытой мистики и тайного преклонения перед неведомыми законами Судбы, навязывающими нам свою верховную волю и не считающими с нашими планами' (А.М.Евлakhov, Артур Шницлер (Баку, 1926), p.103).

"So fluch' ich dir in meinem letzten Augenblick",
 rief der Jüngling, mit der Bitternis des Todes im
 Herzen. "Denn bist du die Kraft, die am Anfang
 aller Tage war und weiter wirkt in die Ewigkeit
 durch alles Geschehen, dann mußt' ich den Wald
 durchschreiten, um einen Mord zu begehen, mußte
 über diese Wiese wandern, um mein Vaterland zu
 verderben, mußte den Felsen erklimmen, um meinen
 Untergang zu finden - deiner Warnung zum Trotz.
 Warum also war ich verurteilt, sie zu hören,
 dreimal, die mir doch nichts nutzen durfte? Mußte
 auch dies sein? Und warum, o Hohn über allem
 Hohn, muß ich noch im letzten Augenblick mein
 ohnmächtiges Warum dir entgegenwimmern?"
 (E II, p.10)

Just as Vienna was a world centre of medicine at the turn of the century, so too were there few more fertile places in Europe for research into psychiatry. At the head of the field, of course, was Sigmund Freud who, having studied hypnosis under Charcot in Paris, returned to Vienna in 1886 to continue his work with Breuer and later Meynert. These were key years for Freud in the development of psychoanalysis, yet it was a development that could only have taken place against a background of scientific and artistic innovation, and of general neurosis, such as turn-of-the-century Vienna represented. Freud's conception of psychoanalysis, relying on lengthy sessions between analyst and patient, embodied a reaction against the impersonal nature of traditional medical practice, but nevertheless showed evidence of the therapeutic nihilist tradition in the emphasis it continued to place on observation. Widespread sexual repression, the result of a society which thrived on hypocritical attitudes towards sexual behaviour, provided ample scope for the development of a science which sought answers to the psychiatric and emotional problems of human beings in terms of understanding the unconscious mind. Viennese society was a society of double standards. The sexual instincts of men and women as yet unmarried or else unhappy in their marriages had either to be

repressed or satisfied in secret. The psychological pressures, the feelings of guilt, the neurotic mental states, which this choice entailed led to the kind of neuroses which Schnitzler, Freud and others sought to examine in their work as psychiatrists and writers.¹²⁰

The different views of Darwin that prevailed in Russia and the West meant that where Russian doctors saw their role primarily as one of public servant and philanthropist, doctors in the West tended to associate medicine more with die-hard commercialism.¹²¹ As a country doctor -himself, Chekhov was renowned for providing medical care free of charge to those who were in financial difficulties. To him, practising medicine was an act of social conscience, not just a means of income. The philanthropy we see throughout Chekhov's medical career had no place in the medical tradition in which Schnitzler was working. It is perhaps indicative of the more commercial approach to medicine that Western doctors

¹²⁰On Schnitzler's relationship to Freud, see also Henry H. Hausner, 'Die Beziehungen zwischen Arthur Schnitzler und Sigmund Freud', MAL, 3/ii(1970), 48-62; Herbert I. Kupper and Hilda S. Rollman-Branch, 'Freud und Schnitzler: Doppelgänger', Journal of the American Psychoanalytical Association, 7/i(1959), 109-26; Franco Rella, 'Freud und Schnitzler', in Arthur Schnitzler in neuer Sicht, edited by Hartmut Scheible (München, 1981), pp.199-206; Murray H. Sherman, 'Reik, Schnitzler, Freud, and "The Murder": The Limits of Insights into Psychoanalysis', MAL, 10/iii-iv(1977), 195-216; and Bernd Urban, 'Arthur Schnitzler und Sigmund Freud: Aus den Anfängen des 'Doppelgängers'', Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, 24(1974), 193-223.

¹²¹Kapustin, for example, describes the work of a zemstvo physician as a 'public function'. 'In European towns', he writes, 'competition among doctors is general; it is a question as to who will have the largest practice; this competition does not exist among Zemstvo physicians in the countryside, because the doctor is a public servant [...] The goal he seeks to reach is always to decrease the number of patients...' (M. Kapustin, Quéstions fondamentales de la médecine du zemstvo (1889), cited in Mark G. Field, 'Medical Organisation and the Medical Profession', in The Transformation of Russian Society, edited by Cyril E. Black, second edition (Cambridge Massachusetts, 1967), pp.541-52 (p.544)).

tended to adopt, that the financial benefits to be gained from private practice were an important factor in Schnitzler's decision to continue medicine after turning to literature full-time.

By the time Chekhov started practising in the mid 1880s, medicine in Russia had become a prestigious profession. Like Nikolai Stepanovich in Скучная история, medical men could aspire to positions of eminence. Progress in social reform depended on a united identity, however. This unity was achieved by the widespread distribution of medical journals carrying news of current trends and ideas. Chekhov's plea to Suvorin to save the medical journal Хирургия from liquidation in a letter of 21 October 1895 is an indication of the importance he attached to such publications:

Узнав, что журнал погибает, я погорячился; такая нелепость, как гибель журнала, без которого нельзя обойтись и который уже через 3-4 года будет давать барыш, гибель из-за пустой суммы - эта нелепость ударила меня по башке, я сгоряча пообещал найти издателя, уверенный вполне, что найду его. И я усердно искал, просил, унижался, ездил, обедал черт знает с кем, но никого не нашел. [...] Чтобы спасти журнал, я готов идти к кому угодно и стоять в чьей угодно передней, и если мне удастся, то я вздохну с облегчением и с чувством удовольствия, ибо спасти хороший хирургический журнал так же полезно, как сделать 20,000 удачных операций. Во всяком случае, посоветуйте, что мне делать. (VI, p.86)

Nevertheless, medical standards in Russia in the latter half of the nineteenth century still lagged some way behind those in the more technologically advanced nations of Europe, including Austria (Field, pp.543-44). Within Russia itself, medical facilities and supplies in the cities were generally superior to those in the country. The large rural population imposed heavy, if not impossible burdens on the relatively small numbers of country doctors. During the cholera epidemic of 1892, Chekhov had direct experience of the kind of pressures

country doctors often had to face. In a letter to N.A.Leikin of 13 July 1892, he writes:

В 1848г в моем участке была холера жестокая; рассчитываем, что и теперь она будет не слабее, хотя, впрочем, божья воля. Участки велики, так что все время у врачей будет уходить только на утомительные разъезды. Бараков нет, трагедии будут разыгрываться в избах или на чистом воздухе. Помощников нет. Дезинфекции и лекарств обещают безгранично. Дороги скверные, а лошади у меня еще хуже. Что же касается моего здоровья, то я уж к полудню начинаю чувствовать утомление и желание завалиться спать. Это без холеры, а что будет при холере, посмотрим. (V, p.92)

In addition, inefficiency, unprofessionalism and incompetence were rampant in many medical institutions. As Panaurov in Три года says:

Возьмите вы здешних жрецов науки, здешнюю, так сказать, интеллигенцию. Можете ли себе представить, здесь в городе 28 докторов, все они нажили себе состояния и живут в собственных домах, а население между тем по-прежнему находится в самом беспомощном положении. [...] Ничего они не знают, не понимают, ничем не интересуются. (IX, p.14)

Despite such neglect, however, the general trend in Russia at the turn of the century, just as in Austria and Europe as a whole, was towards a better quality and provision of medicine. There was still a great deal of room for improvement, but at least things were now moving in the right direction.

4.2 Personal Experiences and Attitudes

Chekhov entered the Medical Faculty of Moscow University in 1879 as an enthusiastic and conscientious student. Among those who taught him and influenced his philosophical outlook were such eminent professors as G.A.Zakhar'in, A.A.Ostroumov, M.V.Sklifosovskii, and F.F.Erisman. On graduating in 1884 Chekhov had developed not only an academic turn of mind but also a special

interest in psychology,¹²² reflected in two dissertations he intended to write but never finished.¹²³ At university, Chekhov received an all-round medical training that equipped him with the basic skills needed for general practice.

After completing university, Chekhov worked for a short time in the summer of 1884 as a stand-in doctor on the medical staff of the Zvenigorod zemstvo, not far from Moscow. In the autumn, Chekhov returned to Moscow and set up his own practice where he worked, often without payment, for the next few years. Summers would see him working as a country doctor in the environs of Moscow, in Babkino near Voskresensk (1885-), then in Luka near Sumy (1888-), and finally in Bogimovo (1891-). In the spring of 1890, Chekhov set out on an arduous journey across Russia to the penal colony of Sakhalin. There he spent three months collecting data about convict life on the island which he subsequently published as a sociological study under the title Остров Сахалин. The exact reasons

¹²²It is worth noting that Geizer refers to Chekhov as a 'велики[й] художник-психолог' (I.M.Geizer, Чехов и медицина (Moskva, 1954), p.86). Geizer goes on to say that every writer indeed should have some understanding of psychology.

¹²³The first was to be a study of the sexes entitled 'История полового авторитета'. See also Chekhov's letter to his brother Aleksandr of 17 or 18 April 1883, (I, pp.63-66). The second was a work entitled Врачебное дело в России (1884-85) for which he conducted much research and prepared an extensive bibliography.

for his trip are not clear,¹²⁴ although it would be safe to assume Chekhov was attempting some kind of synthesis between the literary and the scientific facets of his personality. His concern for the welfare of prisoners in exile bears witness to the humanist ethos of the followers of Pirogov, and the influence of his mentors at university. Published in 1893, Остров Сахалин drew widespread attention to the injustices suffered by prisoners on the island, and encouraged the government to make a number of significant reforms. Somewhat surprisingly, however, few of the impressions Chekhov received during the trip found their way directly into his literature. В ссылке (consisting of a conversation among exiles in Siberia), Убийство, (where a convicted murderer is banished to Sakhalin), Гусев, (in which Gusev lies dying on a ship in the Indian Ocean bound for Russia), are among the few stories which do reflect Chekhov's Sakhalin experiences directly.

In 1892 Chekhov moved to Melikhovo where he lived for almost a decade working as a doctor on the Serpukhov council and engrossing himself in local affairs. He consistently showed the kind of social commitment on which his own standing as a doctor and the future of medicine at large depended. In Zvenigorod, Babkino and

¹²⁴In a letter to Suvorin on 9 March 1890, Chekhov writes: 'Насчет Сахалина ошибаемся мы оба, но Вы, вероятно, больше, чем я. Еду я совершенно уверенный, что моя поездка не даст ценного вклада ни в литературу, ни в науку: не хватит на это ни знаний, ни времени, ни претензий. Нет у меня планов ни гумбольдтских, ни даже кеннановских. Я хочу написать хоть 100-200 страниц и этим немножко заплатить своей медицине, перед которой я, как Вам известно, свинья' (IV, p.31). The motives which Chekhov himself gives for undertaking the trip are ambiguous and contradictory. Hingley names Chekhov's four main motives as being 'literary, scientific, humanitarian and personal' (Ronald Hingley, A New Life of Anton Chekhov (London, 1976), p.128). The most important of these, says Hingley, was simply the 'fourth, more private, motive: the need for a change' (p.130).

Melikhovo, Chekhov was fortunate to work alongside colleagues who shared his own sense of commitment and conscientiousness.¹²⁵ He won the respect and trust of the local people by integrating into the community and by working selflessly among them. In a letter to L.A.Avilova, Chekhov acknowledges the part which medicine played in establishing a friendly rapport between himself and the local people:

С мужиками я живу мирно, у меня никогда ничего не крадут, и старухи, когда я прохожу по деревне, улыбаются или крестятся. Я всем, кроме детей, говорю 'вы', никогда не кричу, но главное, что устроило наши добрые отношения, - это медицина. (VIII, p.121)

He led a busy life, particularly at times of acute crisis such as during the winter famine of 1891-92 and the cholera epidemics of 1892 and 1893. On 10 October, in the Autumn following the first cholera outbreak, Chekhov wrote to Suvorin:

Летом трудненько жилось, но теперь мне кажется, что ни одно лето я не проводил так хорошо, как это. Несмотря на холерную сумятицу и безденежье, державшее меня в лапах до осени, мне нравилось и хотелось жить. [...] Прежние наши страхи перед мужиками кажутся теперь нелепостью. Служил я в земстве, заседал в Санитарном совете, ездил по фабрикам - и это мне нравилось. Меня уже считают своим и ночуют у меня, когда едут через Мелихово. Прибавьте к этому, что мы купили себе новый покойный экипаж с верхом, провели новую дорогу, так что уже не ездим через деревню, копаем пруд...еще что? Одним словом, до сих пор всё было ново и интересно,... Ощущения скуки до сих пор не было. (V, pp.112-13)

Chekhov's untiring attitude to work made him an exemplary exponent of the notion of community involvement central to Russian medical philosophy. In accordance with that

¹²⁵In Melikhovo alone, these included such people as P.I.Kurkin, a doctor specialising in hygiene, the surgeon I.G.Vitte, the country doctor A.A.Kashintsev, and leader of the Serpukhov district council, N.N.Khlemov.

philosophy Chekhov's work in the community went far beyond the provision of medical aid; in an effort to improve conditions generally, he also helped to build schools and hospitals, equipped public libraries and lent his support to other similar projects.¹²⁶

Through his involvement with the community, Chekhov was able to observe at close hand the way of life of different sections of the population. This is reflected in the variety of different types that populate his works - peasants, domestic servants, factory workers, tradesmen, professionals, landowners. In stories like В овраге, Мужики, Новая дача, for example, Chekhov depicts the peasants from personal experience, - poor, ignorant, given to drunkenness, - not in terms of the idealised image that Tolstoy and others had made fashionable. Such experience provided much of the stimulus for his literary work. In other stories like Жена, Палата но.6, Случай из практики, По делам службы, for example, the medical world provides the context in which the main themes are developed. In the first of these, Chekhov depicts the kind of relief work he had been involved in during the famine of 1891-92. In other stories, we catch glimpses of his life, not so much as a doctor, but as a member of the local council. In Дом с мезонином, for example, he describes the activities and concerns of Lydia, an enthusiastic council activist. In Человек в фугляре he allows us a glimpse of life in a provincial school. In Моя жизнь he depicts the efforts made by a group of middle-class friends to provide local famine relief. The human contact which Chekhov gained through his work as a

¹²⁶In a letter to Suvorin of 20 May 1897 Chekhov gives an example of his work in the local community: 'Одну школу я построил в прошлом году; [...] В этом году я строю другую школу, которая будет готова в конце июня. И эта школа уже обеспечена; [...] Предполагаются еще постройки в недалёком будущем...' (VI, p.359).

doctor and which is inherent in the nature of the profession as a whole, enabled Chekhov to develop his understanding of human nature at large. His literary works reflect the insights into psychology that constant involvement with the healthy, the sick, and the dying, from all walks of life, helped him to make.

Chekhov was eventually forced to give up regular medical practice because of deteriorating health. In an earlier letter to Suvorin of 1 April 1897, Chekhov explains that the prospect of just such an action is, ambiguously enough, 'и облегчением, и крупным лишением' (VI, p.320). In 1898 he moved to the Crimea where he lived for the rest of his life, participating, as before, in the affairs of the local community, but now taking less of an active role in medical practice.

Under pressure from his father, Schnitzler entered the Medical Faculty of Vienna University in 1879 and graduated in 1885. The professors with whom he studied and worked after graduation included Freud's teacher Theodor Meynert, the pathologist Joseph Benedikt, the specialist in skin diseases, Isidor Neumann, and the surgeon, Joseph Weinlechner. It was while working under such men as these as 'Sekundärarzt' in the Allgemeines Krankenhaus in Vienna that Schnitzler broadened his knowledge of medicine. Like Chekhov, Schnitzler too made constant use of that knowledge in his literature. Schnitzler was still at the Allgemeines Krankenhaus when in 1887 he became editor of his father's journal, Die internationale klinische Rundschau to which Schnitzler himself contributed reviews as well as the occasional scientific paper. His essay 'Über funktionelle Aphonie und deren Behandlung durch Hypnose und Suggestion' (1889) was one such piece of academic work that not only reflected Schnitzler's growing interest in psychiatry but also paralleled Freud's work on the subject. Schnitzler's interest in hypnosis is reflected in his

early literary work, notably Die Frage an das Schicksal from the Anatol-cycle, and Paracelsus where he explores the role of hypnosis in unravelling the secrets of the unconscious. Many of his other stories dealing with neurosis and insanity: Sterben, Reichtum, Mein Freund Ypsilon, Die Weissagung, Flucht in die Finsternis, Der Empfindsame, to name but a few, are not just simply a throwback to Schnitzler's own Viennese Jewish heritage, but reflect a genuine and deep fascination with psychopathology.

From 1888 until 1893, Schnitzler worked as his father's assistant in the laryngology department of the Allgemeine Poliklinik.¹²⁷ After his father's death in 1893 Schnitzler left the Poliklinik to pursue a literary, rather than a medical career.¹²⁸ Free now to lead his own life, he was at last able to fulfil his artistic aspirations. It is, however, indicative of a certain lingering commitment to the profession that he did not give medicine up altogether, but continued to practise privately for many years to come.

Schnitzler's medical career was more limited than Chekhov's, a fact which accounts in part for what many have seen as Schnitzler's narrow thematic range. He saw many patients, but relatively few who did not belong to his own middle-class, Jewish background, and compared

¹²⁷Schnitzler's play Professor Bernhardi, with its portrayal of professional and racial tensions within one of Vienna's reputable medical institutions, has obvious biographical parallels with this time.

¹²⁸Interestingly, Urbach writes that the impulse behind Schnitzler's decision to take up literature rather than medicine was 'subjektiv vermittelt, als Widerwille gegen ein oktroyiertes Studium, Ekel vor der Ausübung des Berufes und zugleich Widerstand gegen den Vater, der ihm Studium und Beruf vorgeschrieben hatte' (Reinhard Urbach, 'Nicht einmal seine Träume erläßt er uns', in Arthur Schnitzler: Materialien zur Ausstellung der Wiener Festwoche, edited by Peter Braunwarth and Reinhard Urban et al., (Wien, 1981), pp.7-12 (p.7)).

with Chekhov, travelled but little, rarely venturing further afield than his native Vienna,¹²⁹ still less beyond the boundaries of the Habsburg Empire. Those experiences he did gain through his medical work were nonetheless important to him in his literature.

In terms of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's personal attitudes to medicine, we may discern a stark contrast early on in their professional careers. Although Chekhov never had a firm ambition to become a doctor, when the time came he willingly took the decision to make medicine his career. The materialist creed that informs his literature stemmed primarily from his reading of Darwin¹³⁰ and from the influence of his teachers at university. This materialistic philosophy centred on his belief that everything had to have a scientific reason for being. In a letter to Suvorin of 7 May 1889, Chekhov argues that

...всё, что живет на земле материалистично по необходимости. В животных, в дикарях, в московских купцах всё высшее, неживотное обусловлено бессознательным инстинктом, всё же остальное материалистично в них, и, конечно, не по их воле. Существа высшего порядка, мыслящие люди - материалисты тоже по необходимости. Они ищут истину в материи, ибо искать ее больше им нигде, так как видят, слышат и ощущают они одну только материю. [...] Воспретить человеку материалистическое направление равносильно запрещению искать истину. Вне материи нет ни опыта, ни знаний, значит, нет и истины. (III, p.208)

Chekhov was committed to the Pirogovist ideal of social

¹²⁹One exception was a six month visit to Paris, Berlin and London in 1888 which he undertook to gain useful professional experience. Although a keen tourist, Schnitzler tended to frequent only the well-trodden European resorts. He did, however, make regular trips to Berlin, often in connection with the production of his plays.

¹³⁰Chekhov admired Darwin greatly. See, for instance, his letter to Bilibin of 11 March 1886 (I, p.213). Knowledge of Darwin's writings had, in Shubin's words, 'первостепенное значение в формировании материалистического мировоззрения писателя' (Boris M.Shubin, Доктор А.П.Чехов (Moskva, 1977), p.14).

involvement although his attempt at a synthesis of the scientific and the creative in his life was not without problems. Medicine and literature demanded of Chekhov much time and energy; to strike the right balance was not always easy for him and a sense of guilt 'to перед медициной, то перед литературой в зависимости от того, чему больше будет уделять времени и сил' (Shubin, p.10) was often the result. He would become indifferent towards medicine and sometimes lose interest altogether:

В последнее время мною овладело легкомыслие и рядом с этим меня тянет к людям, как никогда, и литература стала моей Аvisaгой, и я до такой степени привязался к ней, что стал презирать медицину. Но в литературе я люблю не те романы и повести, которые Вы ждете или перестали ждать от меня, а то, что я в продолжение многих часов могу читать, лежа на диване. Для писанья же у меня не хватает страсти. (V, pp.244-45)

Chekhov attempted to reconcile the conflict by regarding medicine as his legitimate profession and literature as his secondary one¹³¹, jokingly referring to them as his 'lawful wife' and his 'mistress' respectively¹³². For most of the time, though, Chekhov regarded medicine and art as complementary and intrinsically related.¹³³ Discussing Bourget's 'unscientific' novel Le Disciple in a letter to Suvorin of 15 May 1889, Chekhov writes:

Знания всегда пребывали в мире. И анатомия, и изящная словесность имеют одинаково знатное

¹³¹Interestingly, it was very much the other way round with Schnitzler.

¹³²See Chekhov's letter to Suvorin of 11 September 1888, (II, p.326).

¹³³Winner similarly argues that 'to Chekhov, science was an indispensable aspect of art...' (Thomas Winner, Chekhov and his Prose (Ann Arbor, 1966), p.66). As evidence for this Winner mentions Chekhov's 'almost anatomical dissection of humanity, his conciseness and his objective approach to reality in certain works' (p.66). Duclos also mentions 'l'observation, la finesse, l'esprit de critique et le bon sens' as 'les qualités communes du médecin et de l'écrivain' (Henri-Bernard Duclos, Antone Tchekhov: Le Médecin et l'Écrivain (Paris, 1927), p.82).

происхождение, одни и те же цели, одного и того же врага - черта, и воевать им положительно не из-за чего. Борьбы за существование у них нет. Если человек знает учение о кровообращении, то он богат; если к тому же выучивает еще историю религии и романс "я помню чудное мгновение", то становится не беднее, а богаче... Потому-то гении никогда не воевали, и в Гете рядом с поэтом прекрасно уживался естественник.

Воюют же не знания, не поэзия с анатомией, а заблуждения, т.е. люди. Когда человек не понимает, то чувствует в себе разлад; причин этого разлада он ищет не в себе самом, как бы нужно было, а вне себя, отсюда и война с тем, чего он не понимает. (III, p.216)

Indifference to either medicine or literature was usually shortlived, however, and in a now famous letter of 11 October 1899 to G.I.Rossolimo, a former colleague at university, Chekhov explicitly acknowledged the value that a medical training had for his literature:

Не сомневаюсь, занятия медицинскими науками имели серьезное влияние на мою литературную деятельность; они значительно раздвинули область моих наблюдений, обогатили меня знаниями, истинную цену которых для меня как для писателя может понять только тот, кто сам врач; они имели также и направляющее влияние, и, вероятно, благодаря близости к медицине, мне удалось избежать многих ошибок. Знакомство с естественными науками, с научным методом всегда держало меня настороже, и я старался, где было возможно, соотноситься с научными данными, а где не возможно - предпочитал не писать вовсе. Замечу кстати, что условия художественного творчества не всегда допускают полное согласие с научными данными; нельзя изобразить на сцене смерть от яда так, как она происходит на самом деле. Но согласие с научными данными должно чувствоваться и в этой условности, т.е. нужно, чтобы для читателя или зрителя было ясно, что это только условность и что он имеет дело со сведущим писателем. (XVI, p.271)

Schnitzler was initially less able than Chekhov to reconcile his conflict of loyalties between medicine and literature. Schnitzler had been pressurised into studying medicine by his father, with the result that for a long time his attitude towards the profession was very

negative.¹³⁴ Johann Schnitzler's reputation as an eminent laryngologist only compounded his son's resentment. It threatened his individuality and undermined his self-confidence.¹³⁵ The element of compulsion in his choice of study made Schnitzler even more sceptical towards medicine. In May 1885, he confesses, 'ich habe das entschiedene Gefühl, daß ich abgesehen von dem wahrscheinlichen materiellen Vorteil ethisch einen Blödsinn begangen habe, indem ich Medizin studierte. Nun gehöre ich unter die Menge' (TB, 7 May 1885). Shortly before graduating even, Schnitzler's attitude is 'unsicher und schwankend' (JiW, 4.Buch, Juli 1882-Mai 1885, p.187). He is apprehensive about the prospect of a career in medicine; a year's professional experience does little to dispel his doubts:

Durch die Hypochondrien, zu welchen mir insbesondere die letzten Monate reichlichen Anlaß boten, ist meine Abneigung gegen die Medizin in so erschreckendem Maße gesteigert worden, daß mir vor meiner Zukunft auf dieser Bahn ernstlich bange ist. Wenn ich bedenke, daß mein Leben sich zwischen Krankenbetten weiterspinnen soll, daß ich meine Zeit der Untersuchung von Sputis und ähnl. widme, stets die Stimmung finden soll innerhalb der widerlichsten (ästhetisch und gemütlich widerlichsten) Eindrücke mich aufrecht zu erhalten, so muß ich an eine gar gewaltige Änderung meiner Anschauungen, ja eigentlich meines ganzen Wesens glauben, um ein halbwegs

¹³⁴In his autobiography, Schnitzler highlights the role which both his father and his milieu played in his choice of career: 'In ernsterem Sinne freilich wirkten das Vorbild meines Vaters, mehr noch die ganze Atmosphäre unseres Hauses von frühester Jugend auf mich ein, und da ein anderes Studium während meiner Gymnasialzeit überhaupt nicht in Frage gekommen war, ergab es sich als ganz selbstverständlich, daß ich mich im Herbst immatrikulieren ließ. Eine wirkliche Begabung oder auch nur ein auffallendes Interesse nach der naturwissenschaftlichen Seite hin war bis zu diesem Moment keineswegs bei mir zu konstatieren gewesen' (JiW, 3.Buch, September 1879-Juli 1882, p.90).

¹³⁵So sensitive was Schnitzler about this that he planned to express his feelings in a novella entitled Sohn des Berühmten. The novella was never completed.

glückliches Dasein für mich möglich zu finden.-
[...] Es war eine Rieseneselei von mir -
Mediziner zu werden, und es ist leider eine
Eselei, die nicht mehr gut zu machen ist. (TB, 1
May 1886)

Nearly five years later, Schnitzler's conviction that he
is unsuited to a medical career is stronger than ever:

Mein Widerwille gegen Publicum, Ärzte, Praxis,
Medizin erheblich gestiegen; schaudre vor der
Zukunft. [...] Ich bin mit der Medizin innerlich
fertig. Ich weiß - etwas spät - taue absolut
nicht dazu. Mich ekelt vor den Patienten, vor den
Collegen, vor allem, was mich an den Beruf
erinnert. (TB, 17 January 1890)

By this time, however, Schnitzler knows it is a question
of simple endurance:

Medizin wie früher. [...] Halte es eben aus, weil
ichs aushalten muß, es ist aber entsetzlich. (TB,
December 1890)

Such remarks suggest that Schnitzler loathed medicine.
They must be seen, however, in the context of a young man
resentful of his father's authoritarian influence and in
search of his own identity. Schnitzler had always felt
drawn towards a literary career, thus medicine
represented an obstacle in the pursuit of that goal:

Ich weiß es noch nicht, weiß es heute, wo ich in
der Blüte geistiger Jugendkraft stehen sollte,
noch nicht, ob in mir ein wahres Talent für die
Kunst steckt - daß ich aber mit allen Fasern
meines Lebens, meines höheren Denkens dahin
gravitiere, daß ich etwas, wie Heimweh nach jenem
Gebiet empfinde, das fühl ich deutlich - und habe
es nie deutlicher gefühlt als jetzt, wo ich bis
zum Hals in der Medizin drin stecke.
(TB, 7 May 1885)

Though aware that medicine had been a mistake, Schnitzler
was always conscious of the advantages that a medical
training offered the creative writer. In a diary entry of
1886, he speaks 'von einer gewissen Schärfe des Blicks
und geklärteren Anschauungen, in die [ihn] das
medizinische Studium eingeführt hat[te]'
(TB, 1 May 1886). Significantly, this 'Schärfe des

Blicks' was something that Schnitzler, like Chekhov, would stress again many years later:

Nach wie vor blieb ich dem Studium der Medizin dankbar dafür, daß es mir den Blick geschärft und die Anschauung geklärt hatte;- daß ich sie aber als Beruf gewählt, sah ich vor allem mit Rücksicht auf meine hypochondrischen Anlagen als eine arge und leider nicht wiedergutzumachende Dummheit an. (JiW, 6.Buch, April 1886-August 1887, p.222)

Although Schnitzler had misgivings about his work as a doctor, his problem was compounded by lack of self-confidence as a writer. For Schnitzler too, the relationship between medicine and literature was ambiguous:

Ich mag wie viel immer über den innigen Zusammenhang zwischen Medizin und Poesie meditieren - es bleibt doch wahr, daß man nicht zu gleicher Zeit ein ganzer Poet und ein ganzer Mediziner sein kann. Hin- und hergeworfen zwischen Wissenschaft und Kunst bringe ich zu keinem von beiden mein ganzes Ich mit und werde in der Arbeit durchs Dichten, im Dichten durch die Arbeit gestört. Dazu interessiert mich die ganze Sache mehr, als ich jemals erwartet. Andererseits spür ich, sobald ich die Poesie eine Zeitlang vernachlässige - eine Art Heimweh, innere Verwirrung, Traurigkeit, womit übrigens noch nicht gesagt ist, daß sich zu gleicher Zeit Begeisterung, Inspiration einstellt. (TB, 15 December 1880)

It was only after Schnitzler decided to concentrate on literature rather than on medicine that he was able to reconcile the two.¹³⁶ He now regards the medical profession as 'ein schöner, im höchsten Sinn anständiger Beruf' (TB, 22 March 1910), and it is as such that he generally portrays medicine in his literature. It is significant that the three Chekhov works which, as far as

¹³⁶Two years after his father's death Schnitzler writes: 'Ich kokettiere ein wenig mit meinem ärztlichen Beruf, seit ein liter. Vorwärtsschreiten zu merken' (TB, 15 August 1895).

we know, Schnitzler most admired, each have a specific medical connection: in Дуэль, while Von Koren expounds at length on Darwin, an ex-army doctor, Samoïlenko, argues for moderation and rationality; in Скучная история, the central character is an ageing professor of medicine; and in Дядя Ваня, Astrov, one of Chekhov's most intriguing doctors, plays a central role.

Whilst at university Schnitzler developed a keen, albeit artistically inclined interest in psychology: 'Zur Natur als solcher', he writes, 'verhielt ich mich noch lange Zeit mehr in einer vagen, poetisch-sentimentalen, als in einer naiv-betrachtenden Weise, und meine Wißbegierde ging eher aufs Ideelle, Historische und Psychologische als auf Erscheinung, Gegenwart und Form' (JiW, 3.Buch, September 1879-July 1882, p.90). This interest is reflected clearly in his works. Many of them contain observations about human psychological behaviour which parallel some of those that Freud arrived at by more scientific lines of enquiry. In his so-called 'Doppelgängerscheubrief' to Schnitzler on 14 May 1922, Freud himself acknowledged that Schnitzler, in Beharriell's words, 'wrote strikingly 'Freudian' plays and stories'.¹³⁷

Ich habe immer wieder, wenn ich mich in Ihre schönen Schöpfungen vertiefe, hinter deren poetischem Schein die nämlichen Voraussetzungen, Interessen und Ergebnisse zu finden geglaubt, die mir als die eigenen bekannt waren. Ihr Determinismus wie Ihre Skepsis - was die Leute Pessimismus heißen -, Ihr Ergriffensein von den Wahrheiten des Unbewußten, von der Triebnatur des Menschen, Ihre Zersetzung der kulturell-konventionellen Sicherheiten, das Haften Ihrer Gedanken an der Polarität von Lieben und Sterben, das alles berührte mich mit einer unheimlichen Vertrautheit. [...] So habe ich den

¹³⁷Frederick J.Beharriell, 'Freud's Double: Arthur Schnitzler', Journal of the American Psychoanalytical Association, 10(1962), 722-30 (p.722).

Eindruck gewonnen, daß Sie durch Intuition - eigentlich aber in Folge feiner Selbstwahrnehmung - alles das wissen, was ich in mühseliger Arbeit an anderen Menschen aufgedeckt habe. Ja ich glaube, im Grunde Ihres Wesens sind Sie ein psychologischer Tiefenforscher, so ehrlich unparteilich und unerschrocken wie nur je einer war, und wenn Sie das nicht wären, hätten Ihre künstlerischen Fähigkeiten, Ihre Sprachkunst und Gestaltungskraft, freies Spiel gehabt und Sie zu einem Dichter weit mehr nach dem Wunsch der Menge. (Cited in Henry H. Hausner, p.54.)

Both Schnitzler and Freud were well acquainted with each other's works, even though Schnitzler's treatment of certain 'Freudian' themes often anticipated Freud's own work. The notion of dreams as the expression of wish-fulfilment in Der Schleier der Beatrice and Traumnovelle, for example, sexuality as the source of neurosis in Der Empfindsame and Die Nächste, oedipal complexes in Frau Beate und ihr Sohn and Fräulein Else are all typically Freudian concepts. But Schnitzler himself was sceptical of many of Freud's theories and disagreed with what he saw as Freud's narrow interpretation of the human unconscious.¹³⁸ Although Chekhov too was keenly aware of the relationship between

¹³⁸After a conversation with the psychoanalyst Theodor Reik, Schnitzler notes in his diary: 'Anregendes Gespräch über Traumdeutung und Psychoanalyse. Überschätzung des "Oedipuscomplexes" von Seiten der Freud Schule (der Reik angehört)' (17 September 1912, TB 1909-12, p.354). In another entry sixteen years later, Schnitzler writes of the 'Genie und Irrtümer Freuds' (TB, 29 November 1928). See also Urbach, in Schnitzler: Materialien, p.8. Schnitzler, Urbach says, 'hat sich übrigens...nie die Methode der Psychoanalyse zu eigen gemacht; er stand ihr vielmehr äußerst kritisch gegenüber'.

science and art,¹³⁹ there is nothing in either Chekhov's works or letters to suggest that he was in any way familiar with Freud's writings. It was only after Chekhov had died that Freud's work on psychoanalysis became established in Europe and America.

It is, however, a measure of the value that both Chekhov and Schnitzler attached to medicine in the long run that both men continued to practise well after they had established themselves as writers. Their works share characteristics, both stylistic and thematic, that can be attributed to the influence of medical training and practice. Both men display an acute understanding of human psychology, adopt an objective approach to the issues with which they deal, and take an interest in social and moral questions. Whether they would still have done so to the same extent, had they not had the benefit of a career in medicine, is doubtful.

4.3 Medicine in the Narrative Works

4.3.1 The Relationship between Science and Art

The stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler illustrate what Oswald calls the 'co-mingling [in both men] of the man of

¹³⁹In a letter to Grigorovich of 12 February 1887, he comments: 'Я помню, читал 2-3 года тому назад [один] какой-то французский рассказ [Edmond de Goncourt's *Chérie*], [...] где автор, описывая дочь министра, вероятно, сам того не подозревая, дал верную клиническую картину истерии; [...] тогда же я подумал, что чутье художника стоит иногда мозгов ученого, что то и другое имеют одни [и те же] цели, [и] одну природу, и [...] что, быть может, со временем при совершенстве методов [одни сольются] им суждено слиться вместе в гигантскую чудовишную силу,....' (II, p.360).

letters and the man of science'¹⁴⁰. The relationship between art and science is a recurrent theme in their works and is most clearly expressed in those stories where the narrator is a doctor. In these, the professional experiences of a medical practitioner form the basis of a piece of narrative fiction. Science thus becomes the material of art, and fiction is invested with the 'respectability' of learning and science. The doctor traditionally understands human nature, is compassionate and reliable and thus commands a credibility that is not always available to other writers. We see Schnitzler exploit this characteristic of the doctor-narrator in such stories as Mein Freund Ypsilon and Der Sohn, where events are related with a scientific detachment befitting the style of the doctor's case-book referred to in the subtitle of each story. In each instance, a medical case-history provides the material for an artistic work. In Mein Freund Ypsilon, for example, the narrator relates what is essentially a case-study in schizophrenia, a story which, however sentimental, the reader finds convincing because of the 'credibility' of its apparent author. In Der Sohn, the reader is presented with an 'authoritative' investigation into the possible effects of heredity. The doctor's professional qualifications lend a stamp of credibility to the stories. The narrator of Chekhov's Скучная история is also a professor of medicine, apparently well equipped, as a trained psychologist, for the kind of self-analysis his story purports to be. Chekhov treats his doctor-narrator with greater irony than does Schnitzler, however, and depicts Nikolaï Stepanovich, eminent scientist though he may be, as someone who is unable to understand either himself or

¹⁴⁰Victor A.Oswald Jnr., 'The Old Age of Young Vienna', Germanic Review, 27(1952), 188-200 (p.190). See also Duclos, p.78. He writes that 'le travail de l'un [the medic] servait à l'autre [the artist], et, sans doute, réciproquement'.

those close to him.

For Chekhov, as for Schnitzler, the doctor's case-book also serves as a source of narrative material. In Случай из практики, Dr.Korolev's professional experiences - in this instance, an emergency call to the sick daughter of a nearby factory owner - form the basis of the plot. In По делам службы, a local doctor and inspector go to Syrnyĩ to carry out a post-mortem on a recent suicide. In these and other 'case-book' stories, the medical case-history provides a vehicle on which broader themes and ideas are developed.

In other stories, however, the relationship between art and science is more antagonistic. Both Chekhov and Schnitzler saw that an over-zealous adherence to intellectualism undermined the freedom on which artistic creativity flourished.¹⁴¹ We see this, for example, in Скучная история in the figure of Nikolaĩ Stepanovich whose lifelong dedication to science has rendered his existence sterile and superfluous. Katia highlights this sterility when she asks:

Читаете вы уже 30 лет, а где ваши ученики? Много ли у вас знаменитых ученых? Считите-ка! А чтобы размножать этих докторов, которые эксплуатируют невежество и наживают сотни тысяч, для этого ненужно быть талантливым и хорошим человеком. Вы лишний. (VII, p.283)

The figures of Katia and the professor symbolise the antagonistic relationship between science and art. Katia has led an adventurous and unpredictable life; she has experienced both joy and tragedy. The professor has spent his life teaching at university; it has been systematic

¹⁴¹Chekhov, as Winner writes, was 'very much influenced by the spirit of empiricism and scientific optimism of the fin de siècle', but, he goes on, 'there is little doubt that he viewed with skepticism a scientific attitude...which sought...to place science above man' (Winner, Chekhov and his Prose, p.90).

and predictable. Their respective views on the theatre epitomise their philosophical outlook: the sober world view of the man of science on the one hand, (Nikolaï Stepanovich has come to regard the theatre as an empty, pointless institution), contrasted with the exuberance of the artistic spirit on the other, (Katia sees it as the pinnacle of human achievement):

Катя же была совсем другого мнения. Она уверяла меня, что театр, даже в настоящем его виде, выше аудиторий, выше книг, выше всего на свете. Театр - это сила, соединяющая в себе одной все искусство, а актеры - миссионеры. Никакое искусство и никакая наука в отдельности не в состоянии действовать так сильно и так верно на человеческую душу, как сцена. (VII, pp.270-71)

As Katia discovers later, both philosophical positions are untenable in isolation. Neither science nor art alone, in whatever form, is sufficient for a fulfilled existence. As Nikolaï Stepanovich's colleague, Mikhaïl Fedorovich, says:

В массе живет предрассудок, что науки и искусство выше земледелия, торговли, выше ремесл. Наша секта кормится этим предрассудком и не мне с вами разрушать его. Спаси бог! (VII, p.287)

Chekhov emphasises the potential opposition between science and art, intellectualism and freedom, in opposing scientifically-minded and artistically-minded characters. Rarely does Chekhov portray a winner. Each of the characters puts across his or her own, often extreme and intransigent views, while the reader is left to judge for himself their strengths and weaknesses. Chekhov gives us such a contest in the figures of Von Koren and Laevskiï in Дуэль. Von Koren, the scientist, is dogmatic and intolerant, Laevskiï, the 'artist', hedonistic and irresponsible. Both men adopt extreme and apparently irreconcilable positions until they are brought together through the moderating influence of a man who embodies both scientism and humanism, ex-army doctor Samoïlenko. The protagonists in Попрыгунья, the physician Думов and

his artist wife, reflect the science/art opposition in their respective ways of life. Where Dymov is self-effacing, conscientious, and emotionally stable, Olga is gregarious, excitable, and impressionable. In Дом с мезонином, the artist-narrator of the story and a local school-teacher named Lydia embody the potential conflict between rationality and emotionality, intellectualism and art. Lydia's professional zeal, her dedication to community work, contrasts strongly with the narrator's idealism and sentimentality. Their dispute is one of pragmatism versus idealism. Lydia, argues in favour of practical aid for the peasants:

Правда, мы не спасаем человечества и, быть может, во многом ошибаемся, но мы делаем то, что можем, и мы - правы. Самая высокая и святая задача культурного человека - это служить ближним, и мы пытаемся служить как умеем. (IX, pp.184-85)

The artist, on the other hand, questions the effectiveness of short-term practical help, seeing the elimination of spiritual poverty as the major priority:

Весь ужас их положения в том, что им некогда о душе подумать, некогда вспомнить о своем образе и подобии; голод, холод, животный страх, масса труда, точно снеговые обвалы, загородили им все пути к духовной деятельности. (p.184)

Chekhov highlights the flaws in both characters, however; Lydia is patronising and authoritarian; her benevolent exterior conceals a dogmatic and tyrannical interior, manifest in the despotic way she runs the household. The artist-narrator is weak and ineffectual, almost indifferent to the social problems with which Lydia deals so rigorously. His call for spiritual regeneration is unrealistic and naive. The intransigence of both antagonists ensures that their conflict remains unresolved. Neither party is able to understand or reach a compromise with the other.

In Schnitzler's work, science and art, in whatever form they may appear, generally coexist more happily than

in Chekhov's. Schnitzler's stories, more so even than Chekhov's, are also heavily populated with artist and doctor figures: the doctor-narrator and his artist friend in Mein Freund Ypsilon, for example; the opera-singer and the consultant physician in Der Empfindsame; Dr. Friedrich and the violin virtuoso Emil in Frau Berta Garlan; Dr. Stauber and the composer Georg in Der Weg ins Freie; Fridolin and the night-club pianist Nachtigall in Traumnovelle; the astronomer Erasmus and the adventure-seeking Dionysia in Die Hirtenflöte. By contrast with Chekhov, however, Schnitzler's choice of these characters is determined more by his familiarity in real life with such types than by his concern to explore any opposition between the values they hold. What conflicts they do engage in have less to do with their professional status in life than with their respective moral attitudes. As professionals, doctors and artists in Schnitzler generally show a relatively high degree of mutual respect.

Schnitzler often combines the themes of science and art in his psychological studies of the artist. This is clearly illustrated in a story like Das Tagebuch der Redegonda where a physician named Wehwald asks the narrator, an author, to record for posterity Wehwald's bizarre experience with Redegonda. At the end of the story, the narrator is left puzzling about the identity of this strange man whose death, he recalls, had been announced in the papers a few days earlier. Clearly, one explanation that Schnitzler offers is that Wehwald and the narrator represent the two personae of a schizophrenic. With loyalties torn between medicine and literature, Schnitzler himself must sometimes have regarded his own life as mildly schizophrenic. In the character of the author, however, as in that of the writer Brand in Mein Freund Ypsilon and the painter Franz Weldein in Reichtum, Schnitzler examines the theme of

artist as madman. As with Kovrin in Chekhov's Черный монах, the artist is a man whose sensibilities are so finely tuned that he becomes highly susceptible to psychological disturbance.

4.3.2 The Figure of the Physician

The large number of doctors we find in the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler is one of the more striking manifestations of the influence of medicine on their literature. 'Schlägt man Tschechows Gesamtwerk auf', as Kerner says, 'dann begegnet uns die Persönlichkeit des Doktors auf Schritt und Tritt, als Haupt- wie als Nebenfigur, am Rande und auf dem Titel, ja, man könnte ganz mühelos einen dicken Folianten "Arzt-Novellen" aus seinem literarischen Riesenvermächtnis zusammenstellen' (Kerner, p.101). Such a statement is just as applicable to Schnitzler. The images of the doctor that Chekhov and Schnitzler give us are not identical, however. Where Chekhov tends to stress the human fallibility of his doctors,¹⁴² Schnitzler emphasises their extraordinary qualities, their conscientiousness, sensitivity and

¹⁴²Most critics agree that Chekhov 'n'a pas idéalisé ses confrères' (Duclos, p.47). Duclos goes on to argue that Chekhov's doctors have good as well as bad qualities; nearly all of them, he says, have 'un air de famille' and 'un air de grandeur un peu triste, non sans panache'. Polackiewicz asserts that all of Chekhov's doctors fall into one of three categories: the 'protesters', the 'unprofessionals' and the 'idealists', but adds that the greatest number of them belong to the 'unprofessional' type, consisting of 'negative individuals from the standpoint of their attitude to their profession' (Leonard A. Polakiewicz, 'The Image of the Doctor in Čexov's Works' (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1978), in DAI, 40(cols.1506A-07A)). Croyden too sees Chekhov doctors as a mixture of good and bad. Some, she says, 'emulate Chekhov as spectators and commentators observing themselves, their friends and patients, and commenting on art, politics and human events. Each acts as a reflector of, and measure for, the human predicament. [...] As physicians, they maintain a mask of infallibility and hope; as men they suffer uncertainty and despair' (Margaret Croyden, 'People just Eat their Dinner: The Absurdity of Chekhov's Doctors', Texan Quarterly, 2/iii(1968), 130-37 (p.131)).

compassion.¹⁴³ In Schnitzler, unlike in Chekhov, the physician is more the idealised figure who stands apart from ordinary humanity.

Chekhov's assortment of predominantly ineffective and indifferent physicians seems to belie the philanthropic ideals of the medical profession to which Chekhov himself subscribed. Few of Chekhov's physicians are villains; most are one-time conscientious citizens whose stamina has been undermined by difficult working conditions and other such pressures. Far-removed from Schnitzler's objective and psychologically secure doctors, Chekhov's are emotionally and professionally vulnerable. Kirilov in Враги, Tsvetkov in Доктор, for example, give vent to common human emotions in albeit unusual outbursts of anger. In Неприятность, poor working conditions compounded by incompetence and corruption incessantly erode Ovchinnikov's morale, culminating eventually in a momentary loss of self-control in which the doctor assaults his assistant. Chekhov emphasises Ovchinnikov's humanity by making him feel ashamed and humiliated. The complexity of his reaction to his misdemeanour, involving guilt, anger and disillusion, is evidence of this very humanity. The doctor is keenly aware of his professional duties but, demoralised by the obvious inadequacies of the system and the insuperable difficulties that this presents, he lacks the energy to carry them out.

Disillusion in the medical profession finds its

¹⁴³Alter categorises Schnitzler's doctors according to their roles within the respective works. As 'Räsonneurs', she concludes, 'they appear as paper-thin prophets of the true world, and therefore positive characters; as human-beings, they are weak or egotistical or both, despicable mainstays of a deeply corrupted society; in their professional capacity, they rebel against social laws and...fight battles for the sake of their fellow humans' (Maria P.Alter, 'Schnitzler's Physician: An Existential Character', MAL, 4/iii(1971), 7-24 (p.19)).

fullest expression in Палата но.6. Conditions in the hospital where Ragin works have degenerated so far that a deep-rooted sense of apathy dispels any hope for constructive redevelopment. Once conscientious and idealistic, Ragin has become disillusioned, and lost the determination to put matters right:

Осмотрев больницу, Андрей Ефимыч пришел к заключению, что это учреждение безнравственное и в высшей степени вредное для здоровья жителей. По его мнению, самое умное, что можно было сделать, это - выпустить больных на волю, а больницу закрыть. Но он рассудил, что для этого недостаточно одной только его воли и что это было бы бесполезно; если физическую и нравственную нечистоту прогнать с одного места, то она перейдет на другое; надо ждать, когда она сама выветрится. [...] Приняв должность, Андрей Ефимыч отнесся к беспорядкам, по-видимому, довольно равнодушно. [...] В первое время Андрей Ефимыч работал очень усердно. [...] Но с течением времени дело заметно прискучило ему своим однообразием и очевидною бесполезностью. [...] Да и к чему мешать людям умирать, если смерть есть нормальный и законный конец каждого? [...] если же видеть цель медицины в том, что лекарства облегчают страдания, то недовольно напрашивается вопрос: зачем их облегчать? (VIII p.83-85)

Like Ragin, many of Chekhov's other doctors, Startsev in Юныч for example, Neshchapov in В родном углу, and Sobol' in Жена, share this attitude of complacency and in so doing, show themselves to be little more than third-rate doctors. In their preoccupation with material comfort they abandon all notions of professional integrity and allow self-interest to interfere with patient care. It is always the poor, as Jakov Ivanovich complains in Скрипка Ротшильда, who suffer most as a result: '- Насажали вас тут в больнице артистов! Богатому небось поставил бы банки, а для бедного человека и одной пьювки пожалел. Ироды!' (VIII, p.300). Indifference to the causes and treatment of suffering frequently goes hand in hand with an ignorance of basic medical skills. This is certainly Vassil'ev's experience in Припадок when he is taken to the doctor for a nervous complaint.

Shelestov in Интриги is more explicit: the majority of doctors, he complains, 'знает меньше, чем любой студент первого курса' (VI, p.361).

Chekhov's portraits of medical orderlies and assistants complete an already bleak picture. Ignorant and underqualified, they attain positions of responsibility as a result of the shortage of trained doctors. They indulge in exploitation, victimisation, bribery, bringing disrepute to an already overburdened profession. Mikhail Zakharovich in Неприятность is the epitome of such incompetence. Drunk, lazy, useless, he embodies the spirit of complacency that constantly undermines the efforts of responsible types to provide decent medical care. Complacency on the part of the staff at Ragin's clinic in Палата но.6 engenders the kind of conditions that obtain there:

Когда Андрей Ефимыч приехал в город, чтобы принять должность, 'богоугодное заведение' находилось в ужасном состоянии. В палатах, коридорах и в больничном дворе тяжело было дышать от смрада. Больничные мужики, сиделки и их дети спали в палатах вместе с больными. Жаловались, что житья нет от тараканов, клопов и мышей. [...] В городе отлично знали про эти беспорядки и даже преувеличивали их, но относились к ним спокойно; одни оправдывали их тем, что в больницу ложатся только мещане и мужики, которые не могут быть недовольны, так как дома живут гораздо хуже, чем в больнице;...Другие же в оправдание говорили, что одному городу без помощи земства не под силу содержать хорошую больницу; слава богу, что хоть плохая да есть. (VIII, p.83)

In such descriptions of medical institutions and in many of his portraits of medical personnel, Chekhov exemplifies the kind of hardship and incompetence which impeded medical progress and with which Chekhov himself, in his work as a town and country doctor, must have been well acquainted. In painting this often negative picture, however, Chekhov does not attempt to condemn his colleagues for their 'unprofessionalism', but tries to

draw attention to a situation for which the prevailing social conditions were largely responsible. Problems of the kind Chekhov portrays in his stories were bound to arise in a country as vast as Russia where the official provision of medical services and training was sorely lacking and where there was no easy solution to the problem of distributing already meagre medical resources. 'Negative physicians' as regularly portrayed by Chekhov are less common in Schnitzler's stories. Schnitzler's negative doctors are not stereotypes of the medical profession, but human-beings, idiosyncratic individuals, who also happen to practise medicine. Schnitzler emphasises the individual, not the professional in such doctors, characterising the private, rather than the public persona. The majority of Schnitzler's discreditable physicians appear in his plays, the medium which most effectively highlights the individuality of the characters. There are few more vicious and disreputable doctors than such as Eckold in Stunde des Erkennens, Schmidt in Das Vermächtnis, the anti-Bernhardites in Professor Bernhardt, not just elsewhere in Schnitzler but in literature as a whole.

We see the same emphasis on individuality in the characterisation of one of Schnitzler's few negative doctors in his narrative fiction: Gräsler in Dr. Gräsler, Badearzt. Like Chekhov's Скучная история, Schnitzler's story deals in depth with the psychological problems of an ageing, disillusioned man of medicine. Gräsler's selfishness ensures that his dedication to medicine is half-hearted and egocentric; his post as doctor of a holiday resort provides him with a comfortable life-style consistent with the complacent attitudes he holds towards his profession. Most important for Gräsler is not what he can do for other people through medicine, but what medicine can do for him. He hesitates in accepting Sabine's offer of marriage, not only because he is

emotionally insecure, but also because he is frightened by the professional commitment such a union would entail; Sabine had suggested erecting a local clinic where they would both be able to work as colleagues. Through such a scheme, Gräsler, in his view, would lose not just his own personal independence, but also his comfortable seasonal employment in the Canaries. Like Chekhov's doctors, Gräsler too is fallible.

The majority of Schnitzler's doctors are stereotypes of professional excellence, however, reflecting an idealised image of human perfection. As doctors, they are professionally competent, and as private individuals, possess such qualities as compassion, common-sense, and the ability to inspire trust. The job of the Schnitzlerian physician entails caring for both the physical and psychological needs of the patient. In Sterben, for example, Alfred's capacity for friendship over and above his professional role recurs consistently. 'Ein Freund', Alfred insists, 'ist ja doch immer noch mehr als ein Arzt' (I p.158), and demonstrates it in his relationship with Felix and Marie by offering friendship and support when they most need it. Marie turns to Alfred for help and protection as her relationship with Felix degenerates. Alfred embodies sense and security in Marie's world of growing irrationality and insecurity. We see the same dual role of physician and friend in the doctor/narrator of Mein Freund Ypsilon and in the figure of Dr.Friedrich in Frau Berta Garlan, in whom Schnitzler highlights the qualities of discretion and sensitivity. Friedrich tries to protect Frau Rupius's invalid husband's reputation by refusing to reveal to the police that his wife's death had been caused by septicaemia after an illegal abortion. Furthermore, the doctor knows that the baby she had been carrying was not her husband's. Friedrich's charitable reticence constitutes a violation of the civil law, and as such, an act of

great personal courage. His actions are paralleled in Schnitzler's dramatic works by the 'illegal' acts which such doctors as Dr. Bernhardt in Professor Bernhardt and Dr. Schindler in Der Ruf des Lebens perform out of compassion for their patients. At the end of Die Toten schweigen, Schnitzler suggests that Emma's physician husband, like Dymov in Chekhov's Попрыгунья, might be prepared to overstep not the civil law but the unwritten law of moral convention in the interests of marital harmony. The capacity to forgive is an intrinsic quality of Schnitzler's humane doctors.

The elder Dr. Stauber in Der Weg ins Freie is Schnitzler's most virtuous portrait of a doctor. Wise, compassionate and discreet, he excels both as professional medic and moral guide. Stauber's modesty and common-sense, his fatherly sensitivity, command respect and inspire confidence. His advice to Anna and Georg is never over-bearing, it is the advice of a fatherly figure who cares about his fellow beings. 'Aber mir scheint', Stauber says to his less disciplined son, who is also a doctor, 'um auf dem Gebiet der öffentlichen Gesundheitspflege was besonders zu leisten, dazu gehört, außer diesen vortrefflichen Eigenschaften doch noch eine, von der du meiner Ansicht nach sehr wenig besitzt: Güte, lieber Berthold, Liebe zu den Menschen' (IV, p.278). It is this quality of love for one's fellow human beings that characterises most of the doctors in Schnitzler's works.¹⁴⁴

The rationality which Stauber displays in his advice to those who seek it, is typical of Schnitzler's characterisation of the more responsible representatives

¹⁴⁴There is an interesting parallel between the elder Stauber's relationship with his renegade, impetuous son on the one hand, and Schnitzler's relationship with his father on the other. In Stauber, we see Schnitzler's conception of the father-figure compensated.

of the medical profession.¹⁴⁵ Where others may succumb to emotional instability at times of crisis, Schnitzler's rational medics remain lucid and level-headed. In Der Sekundant, for example, Dr. Mülling is quick to grasp that the narrator has been unable to announce to Agathe Loisberge the death of her husband in a duel, and takes it calmly upon himself to do so. Where the narrator is impulsive and irresolute, the doctor shows himself to be steadfast and rational, capable of acting with temperance and tact. The doctor in Der letzte Brief eines Literaten also reacts with rationality and equanimity, this time in the face of vindictive personal accusations of hatred and philistinism by the narrator/letter-writer, a failed author. Instead of taking offence, the doctor shows pity and understanding for the author's pathetic situation. Of the three friends summoned to the bedside of the deceased in Der Tod des Junggesellen, it is the doctor too who reacts most calmly to the news of his wife's infidelity, viewing the events of the past with detachment and understanding (E I, pp.970-72). Significantly, Schnitzler refers to the three friends not by their names but by their profession in order to stress the qualities associated with each profession. The observations of Schnitzler's doctors are the result of careful reasoning and therefore carry weight. Except for the evidence of the childhood friend from Merano, who is also a doctor, in Die Weissagung, the bizarre events of the story might easily have been dismissed as a figment of the narrator's imagination. The doctor's testimony,

¹⁴⁵It is this common-sense outlook of Schnitzler's doctors that, in Alter's view, qualifies them for the role of 'raisonneur'. Being the least prejudiced of all of Schnitzler's characters, they stand apart from the others and express ideal judgements, correct solutions, sound advice. Most of Schnitzler's *raisonneur* types are found in his plays. Alter writes that they are 'the most constantly positive' of Schnitzler's physicians but also 'the least meaningful' (Alter, p.19).

however, lends validity to the story. As the editor, functioning as the presenter of the outer frame, says:

Von diesem wieder, einem Arzt, mit dem ich mich anlässlich eines Aufenthaltes in Meran im vorigen Winter zuweilen über allerlei dunkle Fragen, insbesondere über Geisterseherei, Wirkung in die Ferne und Weissagekunst unterhalten hatte, wurde mir das hier abgedruckte Manuskript zur Veröffentlichung übergeben. Gern möchte ich dessen Inhalt für eine frei erfundene Erzählung halten, wenn nicht der Arzt, wie auch aus dem Bericht hervorgeht, der am Schluß geschilderten Theatervorstellung mit ihrem seltsamen Ausgang beigewohnt und den in so rätselhafter Weise verschwundenen Schullehrer persönlich gekannt hatte. (E I, p.619)

Schnitzler's doctors generally do credit to their profession. They are responsible and efficient men who vary only little in terms of character throughout Schnitzler's works. They are idealised human-beings, far removed from the flawed individuals numerous among Chekhov's doctors. Occasionally we find idealised stereotypes even among these, however. The doctor in Рассказ старшего садовника, for example, (significantly, the gardener cannot remember his exact name because his name is unimportant; it is what the doctor represents that matters), is a paragon of virtue, a cardboard cut-out:

В груди этого ученого человека билось чудное, ангельское сердце. Как бы ни было, ведь жители города были для него чужие, не родные, но он любил их, как детей, и не жалел для них даже своей жизни. У него самого была чахотка, он кашлял, но когда его звали к больному, забывал про свою болезнь, не щадил себя и, задыхаясь, взбирался на горы, как бы высоки они ни были. [...] Денег не брал, и, странное дело, когда у него умирал пациент, то он шел вместе с родственниками за гробом и плакал. [...] Их признательность не имела границ. Взрослые и дети, добрые и злые, честные и мошенники - одним словом, все уважали его и знали ему цену. (VIII, p.344)

The gardener's story hinges on the jury's refusal to believe that anyone could be guilty of murdering so

'perfect' a human-being as the doctor. The character of the doctor is therefore only important insofar as he is the means by which the gardener elucidates his faith in human nature. Idealised doctors such as the one in the gardener's story are rare elsewhere in Chekhov, though. There are few doctors in his stories whose positive qualities are not counterbalanced with negative ones. Korolev in Случай из практики is one such medic who cannot boast perfection, in spite of his many good qualities. Without doubt he displays compassion towards his patient, and like Alfred in Sterben, gives moral support where it is necessary:

-Вас беспокоят эти стуки?- спросил он.

-Не знаю. Меня тут все беспокоит,- ответила она и задумалась. - Все беспокоит. В вашем голосе мне слышится участие, мне с первого взгляда на вас почему-то показалось, что с вами можно говорить обо всем.

-Говорите, прошу вас. [...] Она опять улыбнулась и подняла глаза на доктора и смотрела так грустно, так умно; и ему казалось, что она верит ему, хочет говорить с ним искренно и что она думает так же, как он. (X, p.83, p.84)

Privately, however, Korolev is a somewhat reluctant physician, irritated by having to stay the night 'в чужом доме без надобности' (XII, p.79). Korolev's professional success is also limited, though this may be attributed to his relative inexperience. He temporarily alleviates Marya's suffering but does nothing to eradicate it. In Попрыгунья, Dymov reveals himself as a man of generosity and professional integrity in his self-effacing nature and in his capacity for self-sacrifice. But Dymov too has his weaknesses; overshadowed by Olga and her artist-friends, Dymov avoids confrontation and submits to constant exploitation. Nikolaï's reaction to his wife's unfaithfulness in Сундуга, is more emotional. Nikolaï, a doctor suffering from tuberculosis, displays a capacity for forgiveness by offering his wife a divorce. His magnanimity evaporates, however, when his wife spurns his generosity. Compassion turns immediately to resentment.

Such reactions are the reactions of ordinary, fallible human-beings.

In terms of positive characteristics, Samoïlenko in Дуэль, benevolent and rational, comes closer to Schnitzler's Dr.Stauber than most of Chekhov's other doctors. This same Samoïlenko, we are told,

...на всякого вновь приезжавшего производил неприятное впечатление бурбона и хрипуна, но проходило два-три дня после первого знакомства, и лицо его начинало казаться необыкновенно добрым, милым, и даже красивым. [...] Со всеми в городе он был на ты, всем давал деньги взаймы, всех лечил, сватал, мирил, устраивал пикники...По общему мнению, он был безгрешен... (VII, p.353)

Like Stauber, Samoïlenko's capacity for friendship, and his lack of prejudice earn him widespread respect and popularity. Friend and adviser to people of divergent views, his attempts at mediation between Laevsky and Von Koren parallel those of Stauber between Georg and Anna. Like Stauber, Samoïlenko lays emphasis on rationality, moderation and tolerance. Whereas, though, Schnitzler tends to exaggerate Stauber's virtues, Chekhov remains within the bounds of everyday reality in his description of Samoïlenko as a man of weaknesses as well as strengths; he may be rational and compassionate, but he is also lazy and, at times, complacent, as evidenced, for example, by his occasionally superficial attitude to his profession, and by his over-indulgent concern with rank and status (VII, p.361). Significantly, it is as a private individual that Chekhov portrays him, not as a representative of the medical profession. This mixture of good qualities and bad is also the mark of Dr.Blagovo in Моя жизнь who, on the one hand, we are told is well-educated, interesting to talk to, amiable and sociable, yet on the other hand shows himself to be inpolite at times, superficial, and callous to the extent of conducting an extra-marital affair with the narrator's impressionable sister, only to abandon her after making

her pregnant. Poloznev throws light on the dual aspect of Blagovo's character when he says that all the same, 'этот самый образованный и лучший человек...ещё не был совершенством.' 'В его манерах', he continues,

...в привычке всякий разговор сводить на спор...было что-то грубоватое, семинарское.... то [ему] казалось всякий раз, что культура - культурой, а татарин всё ещё бродит в нем. (IX, pp.231-32)

Both Chekhov's and Schnitzler's positive doctors see moral guidance as part of their role, but there is a difference between the sound advice provided by modest and tactful doctors like Stauber and Samoïlenko, and, by comparison, the hysterical moralising of a doctor like Mikhaïl Ivanovich in Княгиня. Justified though his indignation may be, Mikhaïl Ivanovich's emotional volatility undermines his authority and renders him a figure of ridicule. The moral superiority and imperturbability of the profession's best representatives is here subverted by emotional anarchy. It is very typical of Chekhov's portrayal of doctors in general, however, that he attributes recognisably human characteristics to Mikhaïl Ivanovich. To the reader, the frustration and impatience the doctor experiences is an understandable and forgivable reaction to what is presented as a patently hypocritical and unforgivable mode of behaviour on the part of the Princess.

In the works of both Chekhov and Schnitzler the figure of the doctor is conspicuous by his ubiquitousness. Indeed, the relatively large numbers of doctors that populate their plays and stories threaten to upset the balance of the cross-section of society Chekhov and Schnitzler aim to portray. Their choice of the doctor-figure in their works was clearly influenced by an inside knowledge of the profession. By and large, whereas Chekhov's portrayal of the physician seems to be

conditioned by the reality he saw around him, Schnitzler's is determined by his conception of what the ideal doctor ought to be.

4.3.3 Illness and Death

As practising physicians, Chekhov and Schnitzler came into frequent contact with illness and death.¹⁴⁶ As Scielzo writes, they saw at close hand the 'potential of disease and death as vital parts of life's experience'¹⁴⁷. The preponderance of cases of illness that we find in the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler reflects this first-hand knowledge.

Such first-hand, professional knowledge is also evinced in the accuracy with which both men depict physical and mental illness. Whereas the illnesses encountered in Chekhov's works are predominantly physical, however, those in Schnitzler's are predominantly psychological. This fact illustrates their respective focus of interest and experience as doctors. Tuberculosis, for instance, a disease which afflicted Chekhov himself for several years, recurs consistently throughout Chekhov's works. The many characters in

¹⁴⁶One of Chekhov's earliest memories upon graduating was of the death of one of his patients. The incident shocked Chekhov greatly and dealt a severe blow to his confidence. See Mikhaïl P. Chekhov, Воспоминания Чехова (Moskva, 1959), pp.134-35.

¹⁴⁷Caroline G. Scielzo, 'The Doctor in Chekhov's Works', (PhD thesis, New York, 1976), p.71. Compare also Duclos's assertion that 'les malades sont une foule dans son oeuvre' (Duclos, p.61). Duclos, like Scielzo in her study, goes on to enumerate the various types of illnesses we find in Chekhov's work. Chekhov's forte, he says, is his ability to reproduce medical terminology in the language of everyday usage: 'Il ne suffit pas de regarder, il faut savoir observer et retenir les signes essentiels. Ainsi fait Tchekhov, qui, le plus souvent, pour enlever à ses écrits tout caractère didactique, a soin de cacher le diagnostic et de remplacer la terminologie médicale par des mots pris dans le langage vulgaire' (Duclos, p.62). The same could be said of Schnitzler's treatment of illness in his works.

Chekhov who suffer from the disease, - the revolutionary in Рассказ неизвестного человека, Kovrin in Черный монах, Nikolaï in Супруга, Sasha in Невеста to name but a few, - not only display the familiar symptoms of 'consumption', but also bear witness to the commonness of the disease in Chekhov's day. Chekhov's own personal experience of the disease stood him in good stead when he came to describe consumptives in his work. The exactness of his descriptions stems from this inside knowledge of the disease. Numerous other diseases find their way into Chekhov's work, thanks largely to his broad professional experience. In Тиф, he gives us a glimpse into the delirious mind of a typhoid victim; in Попрыгунья, Думов dies from diphtheria; cancer claims the life of Nina Fedorovna in Три года; a twelve year old boy dies from a brain haemorrhage in Доктор; in Степь, Egorushka succumbs to fever; in Архиерей, Chekhov conveys the experiences of a man dying from natural causes; in Именины, he depicts the physical and mental sufferings of a woman in premature labour. The list goes on. Physical infirmity as such is rarely the main theme in Chekhov's work, however. It is not so much in the symptoms of illness itself as in their effect on the psychology of human beings that Chekhov is mainly interested. Именины is a good example of this.¹⁴⁸ Ol'ga Mikhaïlovna is irritated by the pettiness of the people at her nameday party and by the vacuous conventions they all adhere to. Her irritation is exacerbated by the physical discomfort of her pregnancy. This, in turn, increases her mental tension,- she becomes irritable and resentful, argumentative and impatient. Her nervousness tires her

¹⁴⁸In a letter to Suvorin on 15 November 1888, Chekhov draws attention to the influence of his medical training in this story. He writes to Suvorin: 'Своими "Именинами" я угодил дамам. [...] Право, недурно быть врачом и понимать то, о чем пишешь. Дамы говорят, что роды описаны верно.' (III p.70).

out physically too. As her condition worsens she becomes mentally confused; exhaustion, mental tension, emotional trauma, physical pain, all merge into one:

Ноги и плечи ее болезненно уныли, голова отяжелела от разговоров, и во всем теле по-прежнему чувствовалось какое-то неудобство. [...] Ноги не укладывались, всему телу было неудобно, и она повернулась на другой бок. По спальне с жужжаньем летала большая муха и беспокойно билась на потолок. [...] Ольга Михайловна глядела на его красивый профиль [Петра]. Ей казалось почему-то, что если бы муж вдруг повернулся к ней лицом и сказал: "Оля, мне тяжело!", то она заплакала бы или засмеялась, и ей стало бы легко. Она думала, что ноги ноют и всему ее телу неудобно оттого, что у нее напряжена душа. [...] Досада, ненависть и гнев, которые накопились у нее в течение дня, вдруг точно запенились; ей хотелось сейчас же, не откладывая до завтра, высказать мужу все, оскорбить его, отомстить... Делая над собой усилия, чтобы не кричать, она сказала:

- Так знай же, что все это гадко, гадко, и гадко! Сегодня я ненавидела тебя весь день - вот что ты наделал! [...]

Ольга Михайловна опомнилась. Она вдруг почувствовала свою любовь к этому человеку, вспомнила, что он ее муж, Петр Дмитрич, без которого она может прожить ни одного дня и который ее любит тоже безумно. Она зарыдала громко, не голосом, схватила себя за голову и побежала назад в спальню. [...]

Вдруг что-то сдавило ее внизу живота и спины с такой силой, что плач ее оборвался и она от боли укусила подушку. Но боль тотчас же отпустила ее, и она опять зарыдала. [...]

Я рожу, - сообразила Ольга Михайловна. - Варвара, - простонала она, - но ведь он родится не живой. [...]

Ей казалось, что именины были уже давно-давно, не вчера, а как будто год назад, и что ее новая болевая жизнь продолжается дольше, чем ее детство, ученье в институте, курсы, замужество, и будет продолжаться еще долго-долго, без конца. [...]

- Я не умерла, - подумала Ольга Михайловна, ... когда болей уже не было. (VII, pp.189-97)

Ol'ga's nervous state induces labour and her child is stillborn. Here too Chekhov remains true to medical fact. Instead of attempting to describe Ol'ga's reaction to the calamity, (the dulling effects of chloroform render her

incapable of rational thought), he turns his attention to Petr:

Оля!- сказал он, ломая руки, и из глаз его вдруг брызнули крупные слезы. [...] -...Ничего мне не нужно! Зачем мы не берегли нашего ребенка? Ах, да что говорить!

Он махнул рукой и вышел из спальни.

А для Ольги Михайловны было уже решительно все равно. В голове у нее стоял туман от хлороформа, на душе было пусто... (VII, p.198)

In Chekhov, the experience of illness often sharpens the perceptions of those either directly or indirectly affected. As a result, characters tend to see things in a wholly different light; doubts are cast on long-held assumptions, attitudes are clarified and new insights achieved. In the light of Dymov's illness and subsequent death in Попрыгунья, for example, Ol'ga reappraises, albeit briefly, the value she once placed in her husband, seeing him now as deserving of far greater credit than she had given him formerly. In Невеста, it is Sasha's death after a long illness that helps Nadia finally to decide to pursue a new direction in life. In Скрипка Ротшильда Jakov questions his harsh treatment of his wife only after she has died. Illness, often a portent of death, is a time of reckoning, self-revelation and regret for lost opportunities.

Like Chekhov, Schnitzler is primarily interested in the mental effects of illness. Despite the fewer references to physical debility in Schnitzler, he pays the same attention to accuracy of detail. To Schnitzler, though, physical infirmity is often synonymous with death. Terminal illnesses are a common feature of his works and form an intrinsic part of his exploration of the psychological effects of death on the living. In several of his stories we meet characters who only have a limited time left to live, even though their deaths may be determined by different illnesses; in Sterben, for example, it is tuberculosis, in Der letzte Brief eines

Literaten and Der Mörder it is heart-disease; in Ein Abschied it is typhus, in Dr. Gräsler, Badearzt it is scarlet fever, in Frau Berta Garlan it is blood poisoning. In other stories such as Der Ehrentag, Der Andere, Frau Beate und ihr Sohn, Die Nächste, Das neue Lied, Der Tod des Gabriels, Flucht in die Finsternis and many others, characters meet an unnatural end either by their own or someone else's hand. Suicide and murder occur with relative frequency, underlining Schnitzler's basically fatalistic outlook on life. By comparison, suicide in Chekhov is a rare event, too unusual in the ordinary experience of life to be included in his work with any degree of regularity. Whatever the cause of death, however, Schnitzler is concerned to show how his characters cope emotionally with the trauma. There is no single response. In Ein Abschied, for instance, Albert reacts with cowardice to news of his lover's death, denying all knowledge of her at the first sign of trouble. At the other end of the spectrum, Gustav in Die Nächste, rendered insane by his wife's death, resorts to murder to keep his memory of her alive.

Schnitzler expands the scope of physical illness in his writings to include the portrayal of physical handicap, one area which we do not often see touched on by Chekhov. Again, Schnitzler is interested in the effects of handicap on people around. In Frau Berta Garlan, for example, Frau Rupius's husband is paralysed from the waist down, but it is not so much in his paralysis per se that Schnitzler is interested, as in how Frau Rupius herself copes with the sexual frustration that this entails. Blindness afflicts the protagonists in two of Schnitzler's most successful stories, Der blinde Geronimo und sein Bruder and Das neue Lied. Here Schnitzler explores the capacity of physical handicap to encourage sensitivity and compassion; neither Carlo nor Marie is able to bear the hurt which people they love

have done to them. In Schnitzler, as in Chekhov, handicap, illness and death often lead to a clearer understanding of the world and to greater self-knowledge. The honesty that Georg in Der Weg ins Freie finally displays in the wake of the still-birth of his son exemplifies this:

Und er dachte der Stunde, nach der Geburt seines toten Kindes - da er an ihrem Bett gesessen und sie schweigend dagelegen war, den Blick in den dämmerigen Garten gerichtet...Schon in jener Stunde hatte sie's gewußt - früher als er - - daß alles zu Ende war. [...]

Die Wahrheit ist: daß ich an dieses kleine Wesen, das auf die Welt kommen sollte, geradezu vergessen hatte. Und besonders in den letzten Wochen vor seiner Geburt hatte ich es völlig vergessen gehabt. Ich kann's nicht anders sagen. [...] Und es gibt Momente, da kann ich mich des Gedankens nicht erwehren, daß zwischen jenem Vergessen und dem Tod meines Kindes irgendein Zusammenhang bestehen mußte. Halten Sie denn so was für vollkommen ausgeschlossen. (E I, p.949, p.956)

Physical illness, important though it may be in some of Schnitzler's stories, plays a less prominent role than mental illness in the entirety of his work. Schnitzler's preoccupation with illnesses of the mind is a reflection of his own interest in psychopathology, and is borne out from his earliest stories such as Mein Freund Ypsilon, Reichtum, and Sterben, to those, like Fräulein Else and Flucht in die Finsternis, written in the latter part of his life. Although Felix in Sterben is terminally ill with tuberculosis, it is to Felix's psychological deterioration that Schnitzler constantly turns his attention. In this story, Schnitzler gives us a

'case-study' of schizophrenia.¹⁴⁹

Schnitzler gained much of his knowledge of psychiatry and mental illness while working in the psychiatric department of the Allgemeines Krankenhaus under Meynert. This experience helps to explain not only the accuracy, but also the range of psychoses that we find in his works. Like Chekhov and his range of physical illnesses, Schnitzler employs a broad range of mental illnesses which includes schizophrenia, paranoia, manic-depression, senility, aphonia¹⁵⁰, and delusion. Conditioned by the superficial . and hypocritical society of turn-of-the-century Vienna, Schnitzler, like Freud, sees repressed sexuality as the cause of neurosis in at least some of his characters. In Dr.Gräsler, Badearzt, for example, the doctor's sister, Friederike, commits suicide because she is unable to bear the burden of guilt she feels about her promiscuous past. The conflict between complex sexual feelings and social convention is a source

¹⁴⁹Weiss examines the medical evidence of Schnitzler's psychologically disturbed characters in his article about the psychoses in his works, and describes Felix as suffering from 'massive fear neurosis' and an 'ego destruction from certainty of impending death' (Robert O.Weiss, 'The Psychoses in the Works of Arthur Schnitzler', German Quarterly (1968), 377-400, (pp.384-85). He emphasises Schnitzler's accurate descriptions of what in those days were little understood psychological disorders, adding that Schnitzler 'not only presented all of the major psychoses recognized by present-day psychiatry, but also that he omitted the numerous false types with artfully constructed syndromes that were erroneously postulated and accepted as real by the medical profession of his time' (p.380).

¹⁵⁰See also, Theodor W.Alexander, 'The Authors's Debt to the Physician: Aphonia in the Works of Arthur Schnitzler', Journal of the International Schnitzler Research Association, 4/iv(1965), 4-15. Like Weiss, Alexander too stresses Schnitzler's foresight in psychiatry. 'Even today', he concludes, 'Schnitzler's article 'Über funktionelle Aphonie und deren Behandlung durch Hypnose und Suggestion' can be considered a thorough and valid study of the subject. The treatment which a present-day physician recommends for hysterical aphonia is similar in many respects to the therapy used by Dr.Arthur Schnitzler in the Wiener Allgemeine Poliklinik' (pp.13-14).

of immense psychological trauma to both Else and Beate in Fräulein Else and Frau Beate und ihr Sohn respectively, and ultimately drives both women to suicide. In Der Empfindsame, Schnitzler satirises sexuality as source of neurosis in having the doctor diagnose sexual abstinence as the cause of the opera-singer's aphonia. Not all the psychological illnesses we find in Schnitzler's works have a sexual origin. Friedrich Roland in Der Ehrentag suffers from manic depression caused by a long and deeply held sense of failure. In Sterben the terror of dying alone is the cause of Felix's schizophrenia, while in Flucht in die Finsternis Robert inhabits a hostile environment of his own making.

The descriptions of psychological disorders that we find in Chekhov's works, though less numerous, are certainly no less medically accurate. In a letter to Pleshcheev of 13 November 1888, Chekhov prides himself on his psychologically authentic portrayal of Vasil'ev's nervous breakdown in Припадок:

Мне как медику, кажется, что душевную боль я описал правильно, по всем правилам психиатрической науки. (III, p.68)

Vassil'ev equates insanity with social dissent and like many of Chekhov's mentally deranged characters, questions the authority of a society that judges sanity on the ability of the individual to conform to its conventions:

Вы психиатр? - спросил грубо Васильев.
Да-с, психиатр.
Может быть, все вы и правы! - сказал Васильев... Но мне все это кажется удивительным! Что я был на двух факультетах - в этом видят подвиг; за то, что я написал сочинение, которое через три года будет брошено и забудется, меня превозносят до небес, а за то, что о падших женщинах я не могу говорить так же хладнокровно, как об этих стульях, меня лечат, называют сумасшедшим, сожалеют! (VII, p.221)

This theme is expanded in Палата но.6. The difference between sanity and insanity is increasingly obscured as

Ragin feels attracted by what he regards as the uniquely valuable conversation provided by one of the inmates of the mental ward. His conversations with Gromov, a paranoid suffering from delusions of victimisation, bring new meaning to his existence. Significantly Gromov himself is more interesting than any of Ragin's petty-minded medical colleagues. Ragin himself is declared insane because his behaviour contravenes the bounds of social acceptability. It is in the mental ward, however, that Ragin finds self-fulfilment. Similarly, it is only when Kovrin's wife in Черный монах, and society at large regard Kovrin as insane, that he sees himself as a man of superior intelligence and purpose. The protagonists in such stories as Случай из практики and Бабуе царство suffer depression and nervous tension because as sensitive individuals they cannot stand up to the demands made on them by an insensitive environment. In Страх, the world at large presents a threat to Silin; it is a place of uncertainty and terror:

-Наша жизнь и загробный мир одинаково непонятны и страшны. Кто боится привидений, тот должен бояться и меня, и этих огней, и неба, так как все это, если вдуматься хорошенько, непостижимо и фантастично не менее, чем выходцы с того света. [...] что и говорить, страшны видения, но страшна и жизнь. Я, голубчик, не понимаю и боюсь жизни. Не знаю, быть может, я больной, свихнувшийся человек. Нормальному, здоровому человеку кажется, что он понимает все, что видит и слышит, а я вот утерять это 'кажется' и изо дня в день отравляю себя страхом. [...] Когда я лежу на траве и долго смотрю на козявку, которая родилась только вчера и ничего не понимает, то мне кажется, что ее жизнь состоит из сплошного ужаса, и в ней самого себя. (VIII, pp.130-131)¹⁵¹

Chekhov views mental illness in terms of the conflict

¹⁵¹What Silin sees as the uncertain nature of the world at large interestingly parallels 'die tiefe Unsicherheit der menschlichen Beziehungen,...die geheimnisvollen Zusammenhänge des Lebens' (Specht, p.59), that Specht sees as intrinsic to the world which Schnitzler portrays in his literature.

between individual and society. Where Schnitzler plays the clinical psychologist in presenting clinically accurate case-studies in his stories, Chekhov examines the question of mental illness more from a philosophical point of view. Where Schnitzler highlights the manifestations of mental illness, Chekhov asks what it is.

It is clear that medicine played an important role in the lives of both men. The influence of medicine on their literature is reflected in several ways. In their works, we see the development of the relationship between science and art, the two areas of life of which they themselves had direct, if slightly different experience. This is primarily reflected in the adaptation of medical case-studies for fictional purposes, and in the frequent appearance of both scientists and artists in their works. The relationship between scientists and artists tends to be a source of greater potential conflict for Chekhov than for Schnitzler. This is ironic since in real life it is Chekhov who seemed better able to synthesize both sides of his career. The doctor is, of course, the most common scientist figure. The majority of Schnitzler's doctors appear stereotyped, almost superhuman in their capacity for generosity, compassion and rationality, Chekhov's are generally ordinary human beings who have no special claim to greatness. One further result of the use of the medical practitioner is the frequency with which death and illness occur. Illness is described with the accuracy of experts, and medical fact is rarely sacrificed for literary effect. Both physical and mental illness, and their effect on the psychology of human beings, figure widely, although Chekhov tends not to explore the field of psychopathology as broadly as Schnitzler. Death too, and the effects of death on the living, play a less significant role in Chekhov's work than in Schnitzler's. For both men, however, illness and

approaching death are an opportunity for self-examination and self-discovery. Medicine broadened Chekhov's and Schnitzler's experience of life, enhanced their understanding of human beings and helped shape their intellectual and artistic outlook, providing them with a fertile source of literary material, and influencing their objective literary approach. It is the common language of two men divided by culture and upbringing.

CHAPTER 5

CATEGORIES OF NARRATIVE

5.1 The Shorter Literary Forms

One of the most striking features about Chekhov's and Schnitzler's entire oeuvre is that it draws predominantly upon the shorter literary forms. The fact that the greater part of both men's literary work is made up of the small-scale categories of the short-story and the stage play suggests a common approach towards literature and literary creation.¹⁵² This is an important factor in the choice of Chekhov and Schnitzler as a topic of comparative study.

The fact that Chekhov and Schnitzler were not only masters of the short narrative but also of drama, highlights their predilection for the shorter literary forms. Their dramatic works can be divided into two categories: the full-length drama and the one-acter. As dramatists, Schnitzler was more prolific than Chekhov, and by the time of his death in 1931, had published seventeen full-length plays and twenty eight one-acters, (including Reigen), compared with Chekhov's seven

¹⁵²Schnitzler combined poetry and drama in a small number of verse-dramas, for example, Alkandis Lied, Der Schleier der Beatrice, Paracelsus, Der Gang zum Weiher, but neither he nor Chekhov wrote any lyric poetry that was considered significant. What poetry Schnitzler did write dates from the early 1880s. See Arthur Schnitzler: Frühe Gedichte, edited by Herbert Lederer (Frankfurt am Main, 1969). In a letter to A.V.Zhirkovich of 3 March 1895, Chekhov expresses his negative attitudes towards poetry: 'Стихи не моя область, их я никогда не писал, мой мозг отказывается удерживать их в памяти, и их, точно так же, как музыку, я только чувствую, но сказать определенно, почему я испытываю наслаждение или скуку, я не могу' (VI, p.35).

full-length dramas and eleven one-acters.¹⁵³ Not only is Schnitzler more prolific than Chekhov but also more varied in his use of dramatic forms. Among his dramatic works we find 'Versspiele', 'Grotesken', 'Studien', 'Burlesken', 'Pantomimen', 'Komödien', 'Tragikomödien' as well as straightforward dramas. Chekhov's plays fall into one of five categories; the 'драматический этюд', 'комедия', 'драма', 'шутка' and 'сцены'. Unlike Schnitzler, it was only later on in his literary career that Chekhov came to regard himself as a serious dramatist. Nevertheless, the attention that both men gave to the dramatic genre was indicative of their inclination towards the shorter literary forms.

It is in their narrative works, however, notably the short stories and novellas, that the best use of the shorter literary forms can be seen. It is a measure of their artistic affinity that both men were inclined not just to write stories rather than novels, but quite short stories at that. Of the short narrative works, only a relatively small minority are longer than about 20,000 words.¹⁵⁴ The course of history provides one possible explanation for this. In Europe, the approach of the twentieth century brought into focus a need to break with the literary traditions of the past, to find new modes of artistic expression which could convey the scientific,

¹⁵³For a list of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's plays, see appendix C. It is worth noting that by the time Schnitzler, at forty four, reached the age Chekhov was when he died, he had written about the same number of full-length and one-act plays as his Russian counterpart, nine and twelve respectively.

¹⁵⁴It is perhaps significant of the direction in which both men were developing as writers, that whereas all but two of Schnitzler's long stories, Sterben 1892, and Frau Berta Garlan 1900, were written in the latter years of his life after 1913, Chekhov's last long story, Моя жизнь, was completed in 1896, that is, before the last stage of his literary career.

sociological and philosophical advances of the times.¹⁵⁵ The growth of Modernism in all intellectual walks of life at the turn of the century was one response to this search. Naturalism, with its emphasis on scientific, political and social reality, concerned itself with the changing shape of contemporary society. Impressionism succeeded Naturalism by turning its attention away from sociology and politics to the psychological world of the individual, elevating empirical experience to a position of preeminence. The individual's perceptions now became the only arbiter of reality. This ephemeral vision of reality was first expressed in the lyric poetry of the French Symbolists, but later found its way into the work of contemporary dramatists and prose writers, and into the kind of shorter narratives that Chekhov and Schnitzler began to perfect.

The growing predilection for the short form narrative at this time reflected something of the social situation in Europe. The Habsburg Empire was in decline; growing instability among the ethnic minorities was coupled with an increasing sense of hopelessness in the upper echelons of society as they watched the dwindling of their political influence. The new century brought with it an attitude which seemed to herald the dissolution of the old order. Disillusionment and apprehension manifested themselves in a 'carpe diem' philosophy, in a desire to

¹⁵⁵See, for instance, Ruth J. Kilchenmann, Die Kurzgeschichte: Formen und Entwicklung (Stuttgart, 1967), p.101.

exploit the present to the full.¹⁵⁶ Vienna was the focal point of this mood of uncertainty. In literature, the insecurity and fragmentation of Viennese society was reflected in an inclination towards shorter literary forms. Novels ceded pride of place to such forms as the novella, the sketch, the one-act play. It was as if writers were discouraged from embarking on large scale works by the same sense of nervousness that fed the malaise of society at large. Most of the members of the Jung-Wien group employed small-scale genres¹⁵⁷ although it was by no means a policy decision of the group to adopt such forms. The fact that so many did, however, bears witness to the common influences working upon middle-class intellectuals at the time.

Literary Impressionism as such was never as firmly established in Russia as it was in Vienna at the turn of

¹⁵⁶Broch attributes this 'nackter Hedonismus', this 'nackte Genußsucht', to the decline of the upper classes' political power. Where there is a lack of political thinking and activity, he says, there the 'ästhetische Kategorie', a 'Hang zum Lebensornamentierung und Lebensdekoration' is increasingly in evidence. Hermann Broch, 'Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit', in Dichten und Erkennen, edited by Hannah Arendt, 1 (Zurich, 1955), pp.43-183 (p.100). The enjoyment of life while it is still possible is the obsessive concern of many of Schnitzler's characters in such works as Der Schleier der Beatrice, Sterben, Der Mörder, Frau Berta Garlan, Frau Beate und ihr Sohn, Spiel im Morgengrauen and others.

¹⁵⁷The influence of the Viennese theatrical tradition meant that most of the Jung Wien writers also wrote for the theatre. In addition, Hermann Bahr favoured the short rhetorical essay to express his views on contemporary literary developments. His essay collections, Zur Kritik der Moderne (1890), Die Überwindung des Naturalismus (1891), Studien zur Kritik der Moderne (1894), are among the best known of these. Loris-Hofmannsthal began his literary career as a lyric poet but later dropped poetry in favour of the shorter prose forms: novellas, essays, dramas and librettos. Beer-Hofmann's literary reputation was founded on a small number of literary works of which his novella Der Tod des Georgs (1900) won perhaps greatest acclaim. Likewise, Schnitzler's literary work consisted exclusively of stories and plays until the publication of his first novel, Der Weg ins Freie in 1907. The best examples of the the shorter narrative forms are those impressionistic sketches which Peter Altenberg wrote in such collections as Wie ich es sehe (1896).

the century, nor as clearly understood. In Russia, Impressionism was a term mainly associated with the fine arts.¹⁵⁸ Chekhov's knowledge of the main literary movements of the day was gained through his reading of writers like Bourget, Zola, Maeterlinck, Hauptmann and Ibsen.¹⁵⁹ Like Austria-Hungary, Russia too was going through a period of increasing uncertainty as the turn-of-the-century approached. Political dissension threatened the continued dominance of autocratic rule. The internal structures on which Tsarism itself was built and depended were starting to show signs of strain. The desire on the part of individuals to advance socially, (just as Chekhov himself managed to do in the course of his career), - something which the emancipation of serfs in 1861 had helped to bring about,- was another contributory factor towards an increasingly unstable society. Though not fully apparent until 1905, the gradual mobilisation of the proletariat into a significant political and social force was beginning to spell doom for the old order. And although the Tsarist censors effectively prevented too explicit a portrayal of the more sensitive areas of political and social life, nevertheless the mood of uncertainty and change was reflected in the choice of shorter literary forms by such

¹⁵⁸Chekhov came into closer contact with European art at the turn of the century through his friendship with the Russian painter Isaak Levitan whose Impressionist paintings Chekhov admired. It is interesting that Levitan himself, in a letter of June 1891, draws a parallel between his own landscapes and Chekhov's narrative: '...я внимательно прочел еще раз твои [...] 'В сумерках', и ты поразил меня как пейзажист' (cited in XII, p.400).

¹⁵⁹See, for example, Chekhov's letters of 7 and 15 May 1889 to Suvorin about Bourget (III, pp.207-09, pp.215-17). Chekhov admired the works of Zola and supported his anti-establishment stance in the Dreyfus Affair. He also admired Maeterlinck, particularly his Les Aveugles, (letter to Suvorin of 12 July 1897, (VII, p.26)), and was familiar with the works of Hauptmann, whom he considered a 'большим драматургом' (letter of 2 March 1901 to N.P.Kondakov, (IX, p.213)). He was on the whole less enthusiastic about Ibsen.

writers as Leikin (1841-1906), Korolenko (1853-1921), Gorky (1868-1936), Bunin (1870-1953), Andreev (1871-1919), Garshin (1855-88), and of course Chekhov. Their use of such forms represented a departure from the novelistic tradition established by Turgenev, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy who, though universally admired, were felt to belong to a past era. Contemporary tastes cried out for something new; this appeal was partly answered by the kind of realistic short stories which Chekhov, (in his mature years), and some of his contemporaries were producing.

In his early years, however, Chekhov avoided large-scale works simply for practical reasons. Obligated to support his family through writing as well as medicine, Chekhov contributed regularly to the 'тонкие журналы' for which short compositions, such as sketches, anecdotes, and humorous stories, were required. Financial considerations were thus one of the determining factors in Chekhov's choice of literary genre. By the time Chekhov's financial position became more secure, he had already grown accustomed to the intrinsic benefits of the short story.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰Occasionally, financial considerations continued to have a small part to play in the composition of some of Chekhov's later stories, as evidenced by a letter to Suvorin of 27 October 1888 in which he discusses his recently completed Именины: 'Но что мне делать?', he asks, 'Начинаю я рассказ 10 цент[ября] с мыслью, что я обязан кончить его к 5 октября - крайний срок; если просрочу, то обману и останусь без денег. Начало пишу покойно, не стесняя себя, но в середине я уж начинаю робеть и бояться, чтобы рассказ мой не вышел длинен: я должен помнить, что у 'Сев[ерного] вестника' мало денег и что я один из дорогих сотрудников' (III, pp.46-47).

5.2 The Problem of Categorisation

The short narrative subsumes several different sub-categories which cannot always be easily distinguished. Confusion consistently surrounds the definition of literary terms because literature, by its nature, is unique and original, and consequently resists rigid categorisation. Literary categories are often loosely distinguished on the basis of such obvious formal and contextual characteristics as length, content, narrative structure, but these distinctions often fail to take into account overlapping areas. It is thus often difficult to differentiate between such related genres as the short story, the tale, and the novella, let alone between genres of different literary traditions, such as the 'рассказ' and 'повесть', and the 'Novelle' and 'Erzählung'. Where, for example, do we draw the line between a long short story and a short novel? The problems of categorisation are compounded by the fact that each literary tradition has its own system of categories, categories which may not be interchangeable with those of another tradition. We can, at best, speak of 'roughly equivalent' genres and forms. We may discern obvious similarities between, say, the 'рассказ' and the 'Novelle' in terms of length and structure, but that does not necessarily mean that both categories are identical.

5.3 The Short Narrative

5.3.1 Choice of Categories

Bearing in mind the dubious nature of strict categorisation mentioned above, some attempt will here be made to make a few general observations about the forms Chekhov and Schnitzler used in their narrative work. As far as possible, the use of rigid definitions will be avoided because of the inevitable complications these create.

Chekhov's later stories fall largely into one of two broad categories: the 'рассказ' and the 'повесть'.¹⁶¹ The most obvious distinction between these two forms is one of length, the 'рассказ' being generally shorter than the 'повесть', but there are also other distinctive criteria. Compared with his 'повести', Chekhov's 'рассказы' are often characterised by a compact narrative structure that dispenses with multi-layered plots. Usually limited by one or more of the unities of time, action and place, they typically deal with a single incident or a series of closely related incidents. Случай из практики is a good example of the 'рассказ'. The plot is straightforward and linear. A doctor is called out to the sick daughter of a provincial factory owner. Diagnosing a nervous disorder, he listens to the patient's troubles, and, having given what encouragement he can, leaves the next morning in the knowledge that he can do little to help. The plot, such as it is, is concise and uncomplicated, there are few characters, and the story as a whole benefits from a cohesion provided by temporal, thematic, and geographical unity.

Chekhov's 'повести' are generally longer and more expansive than the 'рассказы', in a few cases more akin to a short novel than a story.¹⁶² Characterisation is fuller, plots tend to be more complex, and narrated time often extends over longer periods. We see too a greater emphasis on the psychology of the protagonists and on the portrayal of events from the protagonists' point of view. Such features are borne out in Дуэль, for example.

¹⁶¹It is symptomatic of Chekhov's more serious attitude towards literature later on in life, (and of his more secure financial position), that in his mature works he no longer uses such forms as the 'очерк', and the 'анекдот', prevalent among his early works.

¹⁶²Chekhov sometimes referred to his longer 'повести' as novels. It is interesting, too, that Дуэль was first published in 1891 with the word 'Роман' on the title-page.

Psychological interest is maintained by the central conflict between Laevskiĭ and Von Koren, while the main plot coexists with other sub-plots, (Laevskiĭ's domestic crisis, the picnic party, the dialectic of social and political views), to give additional depth to the story. The story is populated by a relatively large number of characters, several of whom, like Laevskiĭ, Von Koren, Samoïlenko and the deacon, all play important roles in the narrative. The duration of the action also lasts several months. Such features have led other critics in the past to view Дуэль as a short novel.¹⁶³ Chekhov himself, however, disliked labels and did not apply them rigidly to his works. Indeed, he maintained a degree of freedom in his use of most literary terms.¹⁶⁴

Common definitions of the 'Erzählung' and the 'Novelle' overlap even more than those of the 'рассказ' and the 'повесть'. The problem of differentiation is complicated by the fact that in common German usage, the 'Novelle' and 'Erzählung' are not necessarily mutually exclusive terms. In its broadest sense, the 'Erzählung' is an 'umbrella' term for all types of shorter narrative fiction, an 'Oberbegriff aller epischer Prosawerke

¹⁶³Karlinsky, for example, asserts that 'by the complexity of the ideas it treats, by its large number of clearly delineated important characters, by the author's deep penetration into the dialectic of their interaction, if not by its actual length, The Duel should certainly qualify as an important novel' (Anton Chekhov's Life and Thought, translated by Michael H. Heim, selection, commentary, and introduction by Simon Karlinsky (Berkeley California, 1975), p.201).

¹⁶⁴It may be assumed that Chekhov would have agreed with Yu. Tynianov when he writes, '"rasskaz", "povest"', (die verschwommene Bestimmung der kleinen Form), wird nicht mehr als Gattung wahrgenommen. Es ist völlig überflüssig, den Untertitel "rasskaz" oder "povest" zu verwenden', (Yuriĭ Tynianov, 'Ода. как ораторский жанр', Поэтика, 2(1927), 102-28 (p.120), cited in Russische Erzählung, edited by Rainer Grübel, Studies in Slavic Literature and Poetics, 6, Utrechter Symposium zur Theorie und Geschichte der russischen Erzählung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (Amsterdam, 1984), p.xi).

mittlerer Länge'.¹⁶⁵ By this definition, therefore, the 'Novelle' is also a form of 'Erzählung'. In its narrowest sense, the 'Erzählung' is a piece of narrative, usually realistic fiction, shorter than a novel and less intricately woven than a 'Novelle'.¹⁶⁶ Strict definition of the term has always been a subject of much debate. The 'Erzählung', says the Brockhaus Enzyklopädie, is

im engeren Sinn eine erzählende Dichtung, meist in Prosa, die dem Umfang nach zwischen Roman und Kurzgeschichte steht. Ist sie strenger im Aufbau, heißt sie Novelle, doch gehen in der neueren Literatur die Bezeichnungen Novelle und Erzählung ineinander über.¹⁶⁷

So diverse are the examples of the German novella that the term defies strict definition.¹⁶⁸ Although there can be little dispute that the 'Novelle' is, in Swales words,

¹⁶⁵Karl K. Polheim, Novellentheorie und Novellenforschung: Ein Forschungsbericht (Stuttgart, 1965), p.73.

¹⁶⁶Wilpert also differentiates between two definitions of the 'Erzählung' in his description of it on the one hand as a 'Sammelbegriff für alle epischen Gattungen,' and on the other, as a 'Gattung, die sich durch geringeren Umfang und Breite von Epos, Roman, Saga, durch weniger kunstvollen und tektonisch straffen Aufbau von der Novelle, durch Vermeidung des Unwirklichen von Sage und Märchen unterscheidet und somit alle weniger gattungshaft ausgeprägten Formen der Erzählkunst umfaßt gekennzeichnet durch dezentriertes, lockeres, gelegentlich verweilendes und entspannendes Entfalten des Erzählstoffes' (Gera V. Wilpert, Sachwörterbuch der Literatur (Stuttgart, 1969), p.234).

¹⁶⁷Brockhaus Enzyklopädie, 17. Auflage, 20 vols (Wiesbaden, 1966-76), V (1968), p.704. Von Wiese underlines this confusion surrounding the term when he writes, 'manche Geschichten, die die Dichter selbst "Novellen" nennen, sind oft bloße "Erzählungen" und so auch umgekehrt' (Benno von Wiese, Die deutsche Novelle von Goethe bis Kafka, 2 vols (Düsseldorf, 1959 and 1968), II, p.22).

¹⁶⁸Polheim differentiates between the 'historical' and the 'normative' schools of novella theory. The historical school, he argues, holds that the Novella as a genre does not conform to any single definition and varies from one historical context to the next (Polheim, p.77). Any definition appended to it is temporary and determined by the shared features prevailing in any given literary period (pp.78-82). The 'normative' school posits a single definition which both transcends temporal divisions and is determined by certain fixed structural and cultural features.

'a vast umbrella covering a wide variety of different positions and viewpoints'¹⁶⁹, its most common definition is as a shorter 'Prosaerzählung' that reveals some new, real, or at least plausible event. It is characterised by an economy of means that dispenses with the kind of narratorial self-consciousness and complex characterisation that is often to be found in the novel. The compactness of the 'Novelle', determined in part by the need for succinctness, gives it a certain affinity with the drama.¹⁷⁰ This affinity helps to explain why both Chekhov and Schnitzler chose these genres as their main vehicles of literary expression. Schnitzler's 'Novellen', along with those of many other contemporaries in Austria and the rest of Europe, exemplify the shift of emphasis towards the psychological novella that the end of the nineteenth century witnessed. Many of Schnitzler's stories are examples of a genre which, in Wilpert's words again, 'ihren Gehalt aus dem Seeleninneren schöpft und nur in der Handlungseinheit die Straffung erkennen läßt' (Wilpert, p.528). In terms of their compactness, linear action, and small number of characters, they are very much akin to Chekhov's 'рассказы'.

Both Chekhov and Schnitzler adopt the practice of naming narrative forms in the titles and subtitles of their stories. We notice, however, that Chekhov's range of such forms is significantly smaller than

¹⁶⁹Martin Swales, The German Novelle (Princeton, New Jersey, 1977), p.17.

¹⁷⁰Wilpert too shares this view. Both the 'Novelle' and the drama, he says, 'verlangen geraffte Exposition, konzentriert herausgebildete Peripetie und ein Abklingen, das die Zukunft der Personen mehr ahnungsvoll andeuten als gestalten kann' (Wilpert, p.526).

Schnitzler's.¹⁷¹ The three main categories named in Chekhov's later stories, the 'рассказ', 'история', and the diary-form 'из записок...'¹⁷², roughly correspond to equivalent categories, the 'Novelle', the 'Geschichte', and 'Aus den Papieren von...', which Schnitzler specifies in his titles. Schnitzler's range of such labels is broader than Chekhov's, however, and includes such terms as 'Burleske', 'Legende', 'Chronik', 'Studie', 'Brief', and 'Tagebuch'.¹⁷³ These provide the reader with information about the shape, the structure, and sometimes the content of a story. 'Labels' of this kind may be either contextually determined, the context or theme thus being alluded to in the title, ('Burleske', 'Legende'), or formally determined, where the formal structure of the narrative is indicated, ('Aus dem Tagebuch von...', 'Studie', 'Brief').¹⁷⁴ One function of both Chekhov's and Schnitzler's use of titles and subtitles is to provide information about the identity of the apparent author. More common in Chekhov than in Schnitzler, the use of such 'authorship tags' as we find in 'Рассказ старшего садовника', 'Рассказ провинциала' (Моя жизнь), 'Рассказ

¹⁷¹Chekhov used subtitles much more frequently in his early stories than in his later works. They contain a wide variety of 'labels', including 'сценка', 'трактат', 'научная статья', 'архивное изыскание', 'отрывок'. Most of Chekhov's plays have a subtitle which provide information about the work's generic format. (See appendix C).

¹⁷²Chekhov employs such terms ambiguously, as in Рассказ неизвестного человека and Моя жизнь subtitled Рассказ провинциала, for example. Neither story is in fact a 'рассказ'; both are 'повести'. Other stories may be referred to by several terms at one and the same time. Скучная история, for example, is clearly a 'повесть' in content and form; its title tells us that it is also an 'история' and its subtitle that it draws on material 'из записок старого человека'.

¹⁷³See appendix B

¹⁷⁴The title of Schnitzler's dramatic cycle, Reigen, for example, is both contextually and formally determined. It alludes on the one hand to the theme of sex as the eternal merry-go-round, and on the other hand to the cyclical structure of the play.

моего приятеля' (Страх). 'Рассказ художника' (Дом с мезонином), 'Aus dem Tagebuch eines Hinterbliebenen' (Der Witwer), 'Aus den Papieren eines Arztes' (Der Sohn, Mein Freund Ypsilon), Der letzte Brief eines Literaten, enables Chekhov and Schnitzler to distance themselves from the text, (or at least to give the impression of so doing), and thus to preserve authorial objectivity. This apparent detachment allows greater scope for irony. Characters and events can afford to be more idiosyncratic, because they are presented to the reader as the personal experience of some autonomous figure. Having transferred apparent responsibility for the characters of the above mentioned stories to someone else, Chekhov and Schnitzler are free to depict them with greater irony than would otherwise be possible. They thus appear more eccentric, and larger than life.

However convenient it may be to try to categorise the stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler, there is an element of arbitrariness attached to any such attempt. Chekhov and Schnitzler themselves were far from consistent in their use of generic terms. It is sometimes helpful to underline common features by reference to narrative categories and forms, but on the whole their stories do not easily conform to narrow generic definitions. With Chekhov and Schnitzler, it is often more helpful, in Strong's words, 'to allow each writer to call his work what he likes and to judge it severely, and without favour, by its own standards'¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷⁵L.A.G.Strong, 'Concerning Short Stories', in What is the short story?, edited by Eugene Current-Garcia and Walton R.Patrick (Illinois, 1961), pp.87-92 (p.91).

5.3.2 Characteristic Features

At the time Chekhov and Schnitzler were writing, a new literary era was dawning. While holding on to the narrative traditions of the late nineteenth century, they incorporated into their stories stylistic and thematic innovations which helped to determine the direction that European narrative fiction was to follow in the twentieth century.¹⁷⁶ As a result, Chekhov and Schnitzler have come to be regarded as two of the early exponents of the modern short story.

When Chekhov's total literary output is considered, we find that it is his mature works which provide us with evidence to substantiate such a claim. It is a common refrain in criticism of the mature Chekhov that in his stories plot development plays a subordinate role to evocation of atmosphere, a trend which heralded a departure from the tradition of the plot-orientated story in the sense of a story with a logical sequence of connected events and characterised chiefly by a clear-cut causal progression. . Many of his later stories consist not of melodramatic, action-filled plots, but simply of descriptions of ordinary people living their everyday lives. In На подводе, for example, a woman returns home from the local village, and exchanges a few words with an acquaintance before proceeding on her way; in В родном углу, Vera returns home after several years absence and tries in vain to readjust to the local way of life; in Студент, a theology student walks home one stormy Good

¹⁷⁶Geissler alludes to the Janus-like status of Schnitzler's literary work when he describes him as an 'Autor des Übergangs', standing 'nicht nur am Ende einer traditionellen, der klassisch-realistischen Ästhetik verhafteten Literaturepoche, sondern auch am Beginn dessen, was man die Moderne nennt' (Rolf Geissler, 'Experiment und Erkenntnis': Überlegungen zum geistesgeschichtlichen Ort des Schnitzlerschen Erzählens', MAL, 19/i(1986), 49-62 (p.49)). The same could also be said of Chekhov.

Friday night, chatting with some local women about the Easter story on the way. These are the kind of 'actionless' plots which typify Chekhov's later stories. From start to finish, comparatively little happens, and little changes. Emphasis is placed on the reflections and the moods of the characters. It is thus that Chekhov's later stories anticipate the modern short story.¹⁷⁷

By contrast, Schnitzler's stories follow along more traditional lines, in so far as the action of the plot, the 'Verkettung und Verknüpfung der Geschehnisse' (see note 177), tends to assume the important role assigned to it by Kilchenmann in her observations about the novella. The innovations that Schnitzler introduced into his narrative works were of a different kind. Although both men pay much attention to the exploration of human psychology in their works, where Chekhov is content to adopt more traditional techniques of psychological portrayal, Schnitzler uses a variety of narrative perspectives in a most original way, attesting to the forward-looking nature of his stories. The passages of free association and indirect internal monologue such as we find in stories like Leutnant Gustl, Ein Abschied, Blumen, and Fräulein Else, highly original in their time, are now typical in modern prose fiction, having today become, in Kilchenmann's words, 'eines der wichtigsten Gestaltungsmittel der Kurzgeschichte' (Kilchenmann, p.187). Schnitzler's innovative and scientific approach

¹⁷⁷Kilchenmann draws the distinction that 'während die Novelle eine lineare Handlung aufweist und auf einen Höhepunkt aus konstruiert ist, [...] die Kurzgeschichte meist ein Stück herausgerissenes Leben dar[stellt] und [...] mit der 'situazione' die flachige, statt in einer Richtung laufende Struktur [teilt], die netzhafte Verflechtung, statt der aufsteigenden und scharf abfallenden Kurve des Geschehens. Die Kurzgeschichte setzt sich oft über die logische oder chronologische Verkettung und Verknüpfung der Geschehnisse hinweg, die das Grundgefüge der Novelle ausmachen' (Kilchenmann, p.17). It is significant that Chekhov's later stories by and large conform to her observations about the short story.

to the portrayal of human psychology was influenced not just by his own interest in the subject, but also by the emphasis in Viennese medical circles on psychiatric enquiry.¹⁷⁸

Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories share certain other common features which anticipate modern narrative fiction. Pritchett concludes that the modern short story is a 'hybrid' which 'owes much to the quickness, the objectivity and the cutting of the cinema'¹⁷⁹. This hybridity is clearly borne out in the eclectic nature of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories, and it is significant that, rather than owe their being to the nature of the cinema, they have provided material for screen-adaptation

¹⁷⁸For some critics, Schnitzler's emphasis on the scientific undermined the literary. Discussing Schnitzler's use of the stream-of-consciousness technique in Fräulein Else, for example, Bennet and Waidson argue that Schnitzler relegates the novella from a 'noble and dignified art form' into 'a menial of science' (E.K.Bennet and H.M.Waidson, A History of the German Novelle, second edition (Cambridge, 1961), p.240).

¹⁷⁹V.S.Pritchett, 'Short Stories', in Current-Garcia etc., pp.122-25 (p.122).

throughout the cinema's history.¹⁸⁰ Written evidence of the kind we find in Chekhov's and Schnitzler's diaries, notebooks, and letters, testifying to the care and attention to detail both men invested in their writing, bears some affinity with the discerning approach of the film editor. The modern short story, Pritchett continues, 'owes...something also to the dramatic compression of the theatre...and everything to the restlessness, the alert nerve, the scientific eye and the short breath of contemporary life. It is the art of the short expectation of life' (ibid). We have, indeed, already noted the important relationship between drama and narrative in the literature of Chekhov and Schnitzler, and note too that both men exercised a scrupulous, 'scientific' eye for detail in their portrayal of human psychology and of life in general. We see evidence too of what Pritchett calls the 'short breath of contemporary life', that he sees as typical of the short story, in the concern that Chekhov and Schnitzler show with the problem

¹⁸⁰In his article 'Chekhov into Film', Stowell looks into the subject in some detail. 'Chekhov', Stowell writes, 'has fared extremely well on the silver-screen. A surprising number of films have been based on his prose and plays. [...] It may be an overstatement to say that Chekhov's stories were written to be filmed, but it is not stretching the point to say that Chekhov's stories are wonderfully filmable' (H.Peter Stowell, 'Chekhov into Film', in A Chekhov Companion, edited by Toby W.Clyman (Connecticut, 1985), pp.233-53 (pp.233, 234)). Fritz asserts, the fact 'daß Arthur Schnitzler mit dem Film in Berührung kam, ist allgemein unbekannt. In dem Jahr, da man des Dichters 100.Geburtstag feiert, ist es angebracht, an das Verhältnis Schnitzlers zum Film zu erinnern. Nicht nur, daß man Schnitzler in den Jahren zwischen 1911 und 1931 (seinem Todesjahr) Angebote für Verfilmungen fast der Hälfte seiner dramatischen und epischen Werke gemacht hat - er selbst setzte sich für den literarischen Film der zehner Jahre ein, schrieb Filmentwürfe nach eigenen Werken, die teilweise realisiert wurden, und war auch im Jahre 1924 bei einer österreichischen Produktionsfirma als literarischer Beirat tätig' (Walter Fritz, 'Arthur Schnitzler und der Film', Die Presse, 7 December 1962, quoted in Lindken, pp.133-37 (pp.133-34)). See also the whole of Chapter 4 entitled 'Film/Musik' (pp.119-46). For a list of Schnitzler's works made into films for the cinema, see Arthur Schnitzler: Materialien..., pp.126-28.

of wasted opportunities and death.

It is often said that the shorter narrative has close parallels with poetry in its intricate, compact structure.¹⁸¹ As we might expect, poetic resonance is a feature of much of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's work, and is reflected in a variety of 'poetic' devices and techniques which include the avoidance of unnecessary details, the use of metaphors and allusions, of resonance and rhythm, and above all, of elegant and succinct prose. We see this connection between poetry and prose in the following passage from Дом с мезонином, for example, a highly lyrical passage, full of poetic vocabulary and effects:

Была грустная августовская ночь - грустная, потому, что уже пахло осенью; покрытая багровым облаком, восходила луна и еле-еле освещала дорогу и по сторонам ее темные озимые поля. Часто падали звезды. Женя шла со мной рядом по дороге и старалась не глядеть на небо, чтобы не видеть падающих звезд, которые почему-то пугали ее. (IX, p.188)¹⁸²

Note, for instance, the abundance of sibilants evoking the imagined sound of shooting-stars in the phrase 'чтобы не видеть падающих звезд', and throughout the passage as a whole. In the first sentence we notice an emphasis on internal rhymes with the repetition of 'u' and 'ust' sounds. When reading aloud, we find that each phrase has

¹⁸¹Swales discusses the capacity of shorter prose forms to shed light on reality and asserts that in the short story or novella, the 'real becomes transfigured', the 'prosaic becomes poetic' (Swales p.34). May draws a parallel between Chekhov's laconic prose style and poetry. 'By limiting [his] selection of the presented event', May writes, Chekhov moves from 'the linearity of prose towards the spatiality of poetry' (Charles E. May, 'Chekhov and the Modern Short Story', in Clyman, p.161). There is general agreement that the characteristic feature of the short narrative lies, in Zenke's words, 'in seiner Konzentration, in seiner Verdichtung' (Zenke, p.50).

¹⁸²It is worth remembering that the fictional narrator of the story is himself an artist of a somewhat sentimental disposition. His poetic manner thus functions here as a device of characterisation.

a definite rhythmic shape, further adding to the lyrical quality of the prose. Attention to poetic devices of this sort is part also of Schnitzler's writing method, as evidenced, for example, by the following passage from Blumen:

Und da waren wir nun auf dem Land und sind auf
glatten, hellen Wegen mit Schellengeklingel
hingesaut, den blaßgrauen Himmel über uns,
rasch, rasch dahin, zwischen weißen, glänzenden
Hügeln. (E I, p.222)

Once again, the rhythm of the passage as a whole, the onomatopoeic impact of the words 'rasch, rasch dahin, zwischen weißen, glänzenden Hügeln' conjuring up the picture of the sleigh racing over the snow, provides poetic colour and interest. Not all of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's prose reflects the kind of lyrical qualities illustrated in these two passages; such poeticism is most apparent in those stories characterised by an emphasis on atmosphere and mood. Poetic as such stories may be, however, never do either Chekhov or Schnitzler abandon that clarity, succinctness and elegance which are the primary features of their prose. Such precision and clarity was encouraged by a scientific training which upheld the importance of functionality and efficiency, and the attempt to achieve succinctness determined a laconic style which relied heavily on implication and innuendo. Inherent in this is the fact that their stories often stand for something larger than their literal meaning, for something with relevance to the world at large. Any examination of the stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler is therefore an examination of the relationship between the unique and the universal. As readers, we are not so much interested in the events of the stories for their own sake, as in the light they shed on experiences with which we are ourselves familiar. Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories acquire, to use Bennet and Waidson's term, 'a certain inner symbolical significance' (Bennet and Waidson, p.19), making the

apparently unique events of their fiction universally relevant.¹⁸³ That universal relevance can only be fully appreciated if the reader is prepared to engage in a process of constructive interpretation. Only then will deeper layers of meaning, other than the literal meaning, be revealed. It is in the broad implications inherent in the relatively narrow explicit text that the significance of the laconicism of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's literary style chiefly lies. A story such as Палата но.6, for instance, can be read on several different levels depending on the reader's interpretation of events. On a literal level, the story is about a doctor whose friendship with an inmate of a mental hospital results in the doctor himself being committed. The story may also be seen, however, as a social indictment of medical conditions in provincial Russia, and on a philosophical level, as an attack on the 'Quietist' values which Tolstoy espoused and made popular. Which interpretation to choose is hence the prerogative of the reader. We see this capacity for multiple interpretations in a number of Schnitzler's stories too. Die Weissagung, for instance, can be understood as a tale of suspense, as an exploration of fate and the supernatural, or even as a study in paranoia.

It is characteristic of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's avoidance of didacticism wherever possible, that their stories are presented without comment or explanation, but with much use of understatement and suggestion. The discrepancy between that which is stated and that which

¹⁸³Von Wiese draws attention to this symbolical significance of the German Novella when he writes, 'Ausdrücke wie "Leitmotiv", "Falke", "Silhouette", "Wendepunkt", usw. sind alle nur Umschreibungen für diese durchgängige Stiltendenz, die einzelne Begebenheit in ihrer besonderen Prägnanz herauszuheben und ihr über das subjektive Bedeutsame hinaus eine objektive Geltung zu verschaffen' (Von Wiese, Die deutsche Novelle, I, pp.24-25).

is implied provides great scope for irony.¹⁸⁴ The emphasis on implication ensures that what is omitted from the narrative is often just as telling as that which is included. In Бабае царство, for example, Anna Akimovna gives the outward impression of being strong, confident, independent, yet by reading between the lines, by interpreting her gestures and thoughts, we soon realise she is desperate and unhappy. In Schnitzler's Leutnant Gustl, the outward view of Gustl as a confident, arrogant young man conflicts with the picture of him as a weak and insecure individual which is implied from his behaviour. By means of intimation and innuendo, Chekhov and Schnitzler invest their stories with several layers of meaning of which the explicit word is just one. The reader has the freedom to formulate an interpretation of the story on the basis of that which is stated and that which is not.

It is consistent with their emphasis on succinctness that both men frequently use abrupt openings which dispense with introductory details, plunging the reader into the middle of the action. As the reader begins to read, he receives the impression of breaking suddenly in on a continuing situation. Information about the setting and identity of the characters is gleaned as he goes along, not in any fact-filled introductory paragraph. At the start, however, the reader is a stranger to the proceedings, startled by the suddenness with which he is

¹⁸⁴Other critics, notably Von Wiese and Swales, have commented on the interrelationship between the novella, understatement and irony. Von Wiese argues that when the writer 'sich selbst zu unterbieten sucht und die eigentliche Bedeutung seiner Geschichte im "understatement" verhüllt, bedarf es dafür der Ironie' (Von Wiese, vol.2, p.20). Swales claims that in the novella 'one notices how subtle, how oblique the narrative perspective is, how often it chooses to imply more than it says, how often it employs irony to suggest registers within its perspective that it will not make explicit' (Swales, The German Novelle, p.55).

thrown into the middle of the action. Reference to various unknowns, as in the opening paragraph of Das neue Lied, only serves to increase his bewilderment and enhance the element of suspense:¹⁸⁵

"Ich bin nicht schuld daran, Herr von Breiteneder...bitte sehr, das kann keiner sagen!" [...]. Aber er erwiderte nichts. Es war ihm unmöglich, sich in Auseinandersetzungen einzulassen; er war zu müde und zerrüttet von dem furchtbaren Erlebnis dieser Nacht, und es verlangte ihn nur nach Alleinsein und frischer Luft. (E I, p.620)

Моя жизнь opens similarly in the middle of a conversation:

Управляющий сказал мне: "Держу вас только из уважения к вашему почтенному батюшке, а то бы вы у меня давно полетели." Я ему ответил: "Вы слишком льстите мне, ваше превосходительство, полагая, что я умею летать." И потом я слышал, как он сказал: "Уберите этого господина, он портит мне нервы."

Дня через два меня уволили. Итак, за всё время, пока я считаюсь взрослым, к великому огорчению моего отца, городского архитектора, я переменял девять должностей. Я служил по различным ведомствам, но все эти девять должностей были похожи на другую, как капли воды: я должен был сидеть, писать, выслушивать глупые или грубые замечания и ждать, когда меня уволят. (IX, p.192)¹⁸⁶

Snippets of unexplained information leave the reader eager to find out more; why, for instance, does the narrator get on his boss's nerves, why has he just been dismissed from his job, what kind of person must he be to

¹⁸⁵In a recent article, Falchikov shows how Chekhov uses this technique for the same purpose in Рассказ неизвестного человека, Michael Falchikov, 'From Dostoevsky's Underground Man to Chekhov's Unknown Man', Scottish Slavonic Review, 9(1987), pp.67-84 (p.72).

¹⁸⁶Derman comments on this kind of brevity in the beginnings of Chekhov's stories when he writes, 'Чехов начинает рассказ либо какой-то одной (буквально!) фразой, вводящей в самую суть повествования, либо обходится даже и без этого' (Abram B.Derman, О мастерстве Чехова (Moskva, 1959), p.76).

have been dismissed nine times already. Such suspense-laden openings ensure the reader's immediate and undivided attention. In spite of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's commitment to succinctness, it would be erroneous to suggest that this is the only form of opening to be found. The longer narrative works and the frame-stories, for example, commonly employ a more leisurely form of beginning. Typically, these contain expositions which provide introductory contextual details. In Человек в футляре, for example, as in Die Weissagung, the opening paragraph, here functioning as part of the frame, provides us with background information concerning the protagonists, their origins and their present situations. Introductory details of this kind put the main characters of the ensuing narrative in context and help to create, by contrast with those stories without an introduction, a more deliberately self-conscious kind of narrative.

It is the ending, however, which offers greater scope for comparison between Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories. Most of Schnitzler's stories move along what Kilchenmann calls a 'psychologically and causally motivated' (Kilchenmann, p.19) progression towards a clearly signalled climax, consisting usually of some momentous, often traumatic event, such as murder, (Die Nächste, Der Mörder), suicide, (Frau Beate und ihr Sohn, Spiel im Morgengrauen), or an unexpected change of circumstances (Leutnant Gustl, Der blinde Geronimo und sein Bruder). Any continuation of the story is often preempted by events which, like the death of a main protagonist, sound a note of finality. By contrast, many of Chekhov's stories reach a kind of anti-climax whereby events are left largely unresolved, just as in the everyday experience of life. At the end of such stories as На подводе, Дама с собачкой, По делам службы, В овраге and many others, characters are left facing the same kind

of problems that they faced at the beginning. The inconclusiveness of so many of Chekhov's endings underlines the rarity with which finite solutions to life's problems are found.¹⁸⁷ The contrast between Chekhov's inconclusive endings and the strikingly conclusive ones of Schnitzler¹⁸⁸ testifies to one of the more crucial distinctions between their stories as a whole, that where Chekhov tends to depict commonplace situations and events, Schnitzler is inclined to portray the more conspicuous incidents.

Both men come stylistically closer in their use of the 'epilogue', providing supplementary information about the

¹⁸⁷Chudakov explains this absence of finality in terms of the randomness of life: 'Episodes', he writes, 'are not selected on the basis of their importance to the whole. Events lack resolution; the destinies of the characters are not finalized. All of these elements create the impression of a lack of selectivity; the author attempts, through this manipulation of material, to capture the chaotic complexity of existence' (Aleksandr P.Chudakov, Chekhov's Poetics, translated by Edwina J.Cruise and Donald Dragt (Ann Arbor, 1983), p.175). Frydman concludes in her thesis that Chekhov's endings reflect his mistrust of answers and his refusal to give assurances, (Anne Frydman, 'A Study of the Endings of Anton Chekhov's Short Stories' (PhD thesis, Columbia University, 1978)). Derman makes a valid point when he mentions that a number of Chekhov's stories, including Дама с собачкой, Дуэль, Дом с мезонином, Моя жизнь and Невеста, which end with the beginning of another potential story and argues, 'эти концы чеховских рассказов возвещают о том, что в изображенном автором жизненном процессе завершился какой-то этап - только. Процесс, как таковой, продолжается, начинается новая фаза, еще более важная, чем изображенная, но создавать ее должен уже сам читатель' (Derman, О мастерстве..., p.86).

¹⁸⁸We should, of course, note that the degree of finality in their stories is relative. Reinhard Urbach, for example, in the introduction to Entworfenes und Verworfenes, sees Schnitzler's stories as basically inconclusive: 'Der Weg, den der Prozeß des Schreibens bei Arthur Schnitzler nimmt, ist dem eines Trivial- oder Boulevardchriftstellers entgegengesetzt. Während dieser versucht, seinen Stoff auf eine Pointe zu bringen, um einen sicheren Effekt zu erzielen, verweigert sich Schnitzler die Zuspitzung. Bei ihm ist die Pointe vielfach als scheinbar endgültiger Einfall zu Anfang da und wird im Laufe des Werkes aufgelöst' (EV, p.viii). It is more difficult to adhere to this view in a comparison of endings in Schnitzler's and Chekhov's stories.

consequences of preceding events. The epilogues to their stories usually entail a shift in time, and are appended either by the narrator himself, as at the end of Архиерей and Ein Erfolg, or, as is more common in Schnitzler, by a fictional editor, (Die Weissagung, Der letzte Brief eines Literaten). In Архиерей the epilogue plays a simple informative role; we learn that a few years after his death, people have largely forgotten the bishop. This is also the function of the epilogue in Ein Erfolg:

Merkwürdig aber ist, daß von diesem Tage an der Bann, der bisher über Engelbert Friedmaier lastete, geschwunden ist. Die bösen Triebe rings um ihn sind erwacht; vorbei ist es in seiner Nähe mit Ordnung und Sittlichkeit, tagtäglich eskortiert er Übeltäter auf die Wachstube, und seine Kameraden sehen bewundernd zu ihm auf. Sie erkennen ihn kaum wieder. Er ist ein harter, grimmiger Mann geworden, und alle Schwüre unbescholtener Leute gelten als verrückte Lügen vor der dunklen Macht seines Diensteides, dem sich Kommissare und Richter beugen. (E I, p.537)

The editor's epilogue in Die Weissagung, however, plays more than just an informative role. His testimony to the authenticity of the writer's manuscript and to the characters and events described in it introduces a sudden and mysterious twist. The editor's comments, citing 'independent' evidence in support of what otherwise might have been regarded as a fabrication of Umprecht's over-imaginative mind, now forces the reader to take more seriously the supernatural questions raised by his story.

5.4 Narrative Subcategories

5.4.1 Formally determined Subcategories

As mentioned above, narrative categories in Chekhov and Schnitzler may be either formally or contextually determined. Categories whose characteristic feature is their form include primarily the frame-narrative, the epistolary, and diary novella. The first of these fulfills a dual purpose, to introduce variety through

shifts in the narrative perspective, and to enable Chekhov and Schnitzler as authors to give the impression of standing aside from the main narrative, thus enhancing objectivity. In the 'tale within a tale', the impression is deliberately created of shifting responsibility for the story, in the first place first from the real author to a fictional author-character, (the playwright in Die Weissagung, Shamokhin's interlocutor in Ариадна), thence to the narrator of the embedded story, (Von Umprecht and Shamokhin himself, respectively). In most frame narratives the narrator of the outer story becomes the addressee of the embedded story. Usually the narrator of the tale within the tale has already been introduced in the frame as part of its function to set characters and events in context. In Die Braut, for instance, the narrator of the frame introduces us to the 'heroine' of the embedded tale, the prostitute:

Auf einem Maskenball lernte ich sie kennen, nach Mitternacht. Ihre klugen und ruhigen Augen hatten mir gefallen und das dunkelblaue Kleid, das sie trug. [...] Sie gehörte zur Kategorie der aufrichtigen Dirnen und hatte selbst in dem Maskentrubel, der alle Frauen so sehr dazu reizt, durchaus kein Bedürfnis, Komödie zu spielen. (E I, p.84)

In Ариадна the narrator of the outer narrative introduces us to the narrator of the embedded narrative, Shamokhin:

На палубе парохода, шедшего из Одессы в Севастополь, какой-то господин, довольно красивый, с круглою бородкой, подошел ко мне, чтобы закурить. [...] Лицо этого господина было уже знакомо мне. (IX, p.107)

The frame narrative acquaints us not just with the main characters, but also with the main themes of the embedded story. Comments about love in Ариадна, the narrator's curiosity about the cause of prostitution in Die Braut, capture our attention and excite our curiosity, thus creating an element of suspense. In Die Weissagung, the element of mystery is encapsulated in a complex

three-level narrative structure, consisting of an outer frame on the one hand, (the editor's final notes (E I, pp.618-19)), and on the other, the writer's manuscript containing an inner frame, (the writer's introduction leading into Umprecht's story (E I, pp.598-603)), and the embedded story, (Umprecht's own story (E I, pp.603-18)). The version of Umprecht's story, here acting as the embedded narrative, is not Umprecht's own but the character of the author's. This in turn is handed on to the reader by a third person, the fictional, supposedly objective editor. The distance that is thus created between reader and events provides a suitable framework for the mystery of the story as a whole. The structural complexity of Die Weissagung is paralleled in Chekhov's works only by that of the trilogy, Человек в футляре, Крыжовник, О любви, in which the three separate tales of Burkin, Ivan Ivanovich and Alekhin are embedded within a single, continuing outer narrative. As in Schnitzler, this outer narrative not only introduces the reader to the narrator, but also to the issues involved. Consisting of conversations between the three friends which throw light on their biographical backgrounds, their attitudes to life, their worries, their aspirations, it illustrates the theme on which each of the embedded stories, in its own way, focuses, the theme of 'футлярность'. It thus gives structural and thematic unity to the trilogy as a whole.¹⁸⁹ Close links of this kind are instanced elsewhere in Chekhov and

¹⁸⁹Schnitzler's narrative work contains no trilogies although a number of his plays were published in sets of three. Paracelsus was first published in book form with Die Gefährtin and Der Grüne Kakadu, (Fischer 1899), and performed as a trilogy at the Burgtheater in March 1899. Marionetten, containing Der Puppenspieler, Der Tapfere Cassian and Zum Großen Würstel was written and performed as a cycle of three one-acters, as was Komödie der Worte containing Stunde des Erkennens, Große Szene and Das Bacchusfest. Lebendige Stunden contains four plays: Lebendige Stunden, Die Frau mit dem Dolche, Die letzten Masken and Literatur.

Schnitzler, in Красавицы and Komödiantinnen, for example, works in which a pair of formally and thematically related stories are combined under a single title. In Красавицы, Chekhov discusses the theme of beauty by means of two sketches in which the narrator recalls two encounters with women of exceptional beauty. In Komödiantinnen, Schnitzler illustrates the theme of 'Spielerei' with two stories, subtitled Helene and Fritzi, about women whose ability to play-act is well developed. The coupling of each story in the pair exemplifies the benefits of the variations on a theme technique.

Further affinity in Chekhov's and Schnitzler's choice of narrative categories is evidenced by their use of 'diary' and 'epistolary' stories in which a fictional character, as narrator, addresses himself directly in the form of a personal confession or testimony. Such stories consist entirely of the words of the fictional character; there are no authorial hints or comments, and they are thus entirely immediate. The diarist or letter writer appears to be an autonomous figure, but his very autonomy provides scope for much irony.¹⁹⁰ There is often a deliberate discrepancy between the explicit and highly subjective testimony of the narrating character and the inferences made by the reader on the basis of that testimony. In Schnitzler's epistolary novellas, for example, in Die kleine Komödie, Andreas Thameyers letzter Brief, Der letzte Brief eines Literaten, the irony and, in the first story mentioned, the humour, lie in the discrepancy between what the protagonists believe and what the reader knows to be the case. Thameyer, in Andreas Thameyers letzter Brief, states explicitly that

¹⁹⁰For a fuller discussion of irony and its development in Chekhov's narrative work, see Sandra G. Narin, 'The Use of Irony in Čexov's Stories' (PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1973).

his wife is innocent, yet we know not only that she must in fact be guilty but also that Thameyer himself knows it. The reason he will commit suicide is not, as he claims, to prove that his belief in his wife's innocence is absolute, but because he cannot live with the shame of her adultery.

In the later works of Chekhov we find that both the 'diary' stories and stories of a confessional nature are more common than the epistolary form,¹⁹¹ yet we notice that the same narrative principles are at work. Chekhov as the real author, withdraws into the background and allows the 'diarist' to speak for himself. Like Schnitzler, Chekhov plays on the discrepancy between the 'diarist's' claims and the reader's inferences for ironic effect. In first-person, confessional-type stories like Жена, Скучная история, Дом с мезонином, the narrating character's self-portrait frequently differs from the picture the reader paints of that character. Pavel Andreevich in Жена sees himself as a philanthropic and affectionate husband; we realise from his own words, however, that he is cantankerous, brutish and profoundly selfish.

However, stories consisting exclusively of verbatim letters and diary extracts make up only a small number of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories. More common are those stories which have such extracts contained in the main body of the text. The objective account of events provided by the neutral third person narrator contrasts with the often highly subjective personal testimonies of

¹⁹¹Письмо, in which the writer and narrator, Bashtanov, writes to a friend telling her about a recent discussion on literature and the arts, and about his general dissatisfaction with life, is one of the few examples of an epistolary story in Chekhov's later work. Written in the late 1880s as part of his planned novel, (Рассказы из жизни моих друзей), it was not published until 1907.

the fictional characters to be found in their verbatim letters and diary entries. These thus become heavily ironic. In the diary extract which begins the second part of Учитель словесности, for example, Nikitin alludes involuntarily to feelings of marital disenchantment. Nikitin's own thoughts on the matter, however, suggest he is unaware of what the reader recognises as the inevitable disintegration of his marriage. In Frau Berta Garlan, the reader immediately recognises the duplicitousness of Emil's relationship with Berta through their correspondence, in spite of the fact that it is in their letters that they profess their love for each other.¹⁹² In Frau Berta Garlan, in Dr.Gräsler, Badearzt, as in Chekhov's Черный монах and Жена, the exchange of letters represents an attempt to establish a relationship between two people where verbal communication has broken down. Sabine, for instance, writes to Gräsler with her offer to marry him because face-to-face communication between them has reached a stalemate:

Heute abend kommen Sie wieder und Sie sollen diesen Brief noch früher haben. Denn wenn ich Ihnen nicht schreibe, wer weiß, ob Sie nicht heute abend geradeso fortgehen, wie Sie alle diese Tage und Abende von mir fortgegangen sind, und endlich wären Sie abgereist und hätten nichts gesprochen und sich am Ende noch eingebildet, daß es sehr klug und recht von Ihnen gewesen ist. So bleibt mir denn nichts übrig, als selbst zu sprechen, oder vielmehr, da ich ja das doch nicht über mich brächte, Ihnen zu schreiben, was mir auf der Seele liegt. (E II, p.143)

Gräsler himself resorts to a written reply preferring to

¹⁹²Berta's letters to Emil also reflect her psychological development. Her first letters, written in the fear of betraying her intentions towards Emil too quickly, are timid and suggestive; her insecurity is reflected orthographically by numerous crossings-out. Increasingly she throws caution to the wind so that in her final letter she confesses her love openly: 'Emil, ich habe nie, nie jemanden andern geliebt als Dich - und werde nie einen andern lieben! Mach mit mir, was Du willst...' (E I, p.493). Significantly, the letter is written as if it were 'in ihrem Kopf längst fertig' (ibid).

avoid the more difficult alternative of a personal encounter. The professor's helplessness at the end of Скучная история epitomises the communication gulf between him and Katia. Their correspondence of many years earlier, detailing their differences of outlook on the world, had foreshadowed what is finally made explicit in the last chapter. Katia's phrase in one of those letters, 'мы с Вами поём из разных опер' (VII, p.272) is never more true than when at the end of the story, Nikolaï Stepanovich replies with a gesture of resignation and defeat to her pleas for help.¹⁹³ The use of letters in Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories instead of direct interaction, thus frequently underlines their view of communication as a fundamental human problem. In addition to the frame narratives, the 'diary' and 'epistolary' stories mentioned above, there are certain dramatic features in the stories of both men which we may conclude bear witness to the influences of the theatre on their narrative work. One such feature is the episodic narrative, similar in structure and effect to the 'scene' structure of the stage-play. In such narratives a series of individual tableaux or episodes, corresponding to the scenes of a play, facilitates the presentation of isolated situations, characters, and events over a period of time, rather than in a piece of continuous action. The episodic narrative, as we find it in such stories as Три года, Ионыч, Моя жизнь, Новая дача, Мужики, В овраге, Sterben, Frau Berta Garlan, Der Mörder, Die Hirtenflöte, spotlights the physical and psychological development of characters. In Три года, for example, Chekhov, focusing on different episodes in Laptev's and other characters'

¹⁹³The idea of written correspondence as the epitome of the failure of human beings to communicate is clearly illustrated in one of Chekhov's earlier stories, Ванька (1886), where a boy spends time and care on a letter which will never reach the addressee because it has been inadequately addressed.

lives, highlights stages in Laptev's emotional development from a time when he is deeply in love with Julia Sergeevna, to a time when, after two or three years of marriage, he has grown indifferent towards her. Similarly in Die Hirtenflöte, Schnitzler relates various adventures in Dionysia's life which represent crucial stages in her self-awakening. Whereas the scenes of a stage-play typically adhere to a strict chronology, the episodic narrative, as employed by Chekhov and Schnitzler, enables them to project past events in flashbacks and occasionally 'flashforwards'.¹⁹⁴ In one such episode in Die Frau des Weisen, for example, Schnitzler takes us back seven years to observe the events which give rise to the misunderstanding between the narrator and Friederike in the main part of the story. The flashback not only helps to establish a specific context, but also gives the reader insight into the psychological development of Friederike and the narrator. In На подводе, Chekhov uses a flashback to an episode in the past as a means of contrasting the quality of Maria's childhood years with that of her present existence. Thus her emotional state is clarified.

Both Chekhov and Schnitzler relate episodes in the lives of their characters which vary in length and importance. However, there is no consistent method of signalling such episodes to the reader. Chapter headings or numbered sections are sometimes used for this purpose, as with the text of a stage-play which is subdivided into numbered acts and scenes. Other times there is no explicit episodic division and the reader is prevailed upon to differentiate the episodes of the narrative

¹⁹⁴Umprecht, for example, in Die Weissagung, looks into the future at episodes in the life ahead of him and, like Vera in В родном углу, or Nadia in Невеста, has intimations of what life has in store for him.

himself.

The relatively frequent use of 'soliloquies' and 'dialogues' in the narrative work of Chekhov and Schnitzler serves as a further affirmation of the influence the theatre had on both men. Passages of direct speech and thought lend their stories a conversational tone, a directness, which is wholly reminiscent of the kind of immediacy we find in drama. Drama and narrative appear to converge closest in those passages of both monologue and dialogue that dispense with verbs of speech. Immediacy is, of course, the very linchpin of such stream-of-consciousness stories as Leutnant Gustl and Fräulein Else which rely exclusively on this kind of 'dramatic presentation' in their use of the direct interior monologue. It is not just these in Chekhov and Schnitzler which can achieve this degree of immediacy, however. Although the following dialogue from Traumnovelle uses a limited number of verbs of speech, there is little else to differentiate it from a playscript. Schnitzler includes occasional 'stage-directions', ('taumelte auf die Tischplatte', 'betrachtete ihn prüfend an'), and gives Nachtigall a broad Viennese accent to reinforce the colloquial tone of the passage:

"Also wie verschafft man sich Eintritt?" fragte Fridolin mit gepreßten Lippen und trommelte auf die Tischplatte.

"Parolle mußt du kennen, und jedesmal ist eine andere."

"Und die heutige?"

"Weiß ich noch nicht. Erfahr' ich erst vom Kutscher."

"Nimm mich mit, Nachtigall."

"Unmöglich, zu gefährlich."

"Vor einer Minute hattest du doch selbst die Absicht...mir zu >vergessen<. Es wird schon möglich sein." Nachtigall betrachtete ihn prüfend an.

"So wie du bist - kenntest du auf keinen Fall, nämlich alle sind maskiert, Herren und Damen. Hast du eine Maske bei dir und soo? Unmöglich. Vielleicht nächstes Mal. Werde mir was

ausspekulieren." Er horchte auf und blickte wieder durch den Vorhangspalt auf die Straße, und aufatmend: "Da ist der Wagen. Adieu." Fridolin hielt ihn beim Arm fest.

"So kommst du mir nicht davon. Du wirst mich mitnehmen."

"Aber Kollega..."

"Überlaß mir alles Weitere. Ich weiß schon, daß es >gefährlich< ist, - vielleicht lockt mich gerade das."

"Aber ich sage dir schon - ohne Kostüm und Larve-"

"Es gibt Maskenleihanstalten."

"Um ein Uhr früh-!"

"Hör' einmal zu, Nachtigall. (...)."

(E II, p.457)

Similarly colloquial and direct is Gusev's dialogue with the soldier after Pavel Ivanovich's death in Гусев:

Что? - спрашивает Гусев. - Кого?

- Помер. Сейчас наверх унесли.

- Ну, что ж. - бормочет Гусев, зевая. - Царство небесное.

- Как, по-твоему. Гусев? - спрашивает после некоторого молчания солдат с повязкой. - Будет он в царстве небесном или нет?

- Про кого ты?

- Про Павла Ивановича.

- Будет... мучился долго. И то взять, из духовного звания, а у попов родни много. Замолят. Солдат... говорит вполголоса:

- И ты, Гусев, не жилец на этом свете. Не доедешь ты до России.

- Нешто доктор или фельдшер сказывал? - спрашивает Гусев.

- Не то, чтобы кто сказывал, а видать... [...]

- Я домой не написал... - вздыхает Гусев. - Помру, и не узнают.

Узнают, - говорит басом больной матрос. (VII, pp.335-36)

Here and elsewhere, Chekhov uses more verbs of speech than Schnitzler and rarely employs the kind of self-contained direct speech found in Schnitzler's stream-of-consciousness stories. Nevertheless, Chekhov's monologues and dialogues contain a dramatic immediacy which results from his intuitive grasp of conversational interaction. Chekhov is not alone in being adept at reproducing the tone of everyday conversation in his narrative, it is a skill shared by both men and

encouraged by their involvement with drama.

Their use of what Stanzel calls 'narrative elements which function as stage-directions'¹⁹⁵, of which we have seen examples above, reflect both men's involvement with dramatic writing still further. Phrases from the above passage in Гусев such as 'бормочет Гусев', 'спрашивает после некоторого молчания солдат', 'говорит басом...матрос', like similar ones in the passage from Traumnovelle, provide information about characters' physical movements, manner of speech, tone of voice, and correspond closely to the kind of information conveyed in the stage-directions of a play-script. Indeed, it is not difficult to envisage any number of Chekhov's or Schnitzler's dialogues enacted on stage. Transpose, for instance, all past tenses from the following dialogue in Die Toten schweigen into the present, and one is left with a text that has much in common with the text of a play:

"Ich hab' den Wagen schon beim Karltheater fortgeschickt. Ich glaube, ich bin schon einmal mit demselben Kutscher gefahren." Ein Herr [geht] an ihnen vorüber und [betrachtet] die Dame flüchtig. Der junge Mann [fixiert] ihn scharf, beinahe drohend; der Herr [geht] rasch weiter. Die Dame [seht] ihm nach.
"Wer war's?" [fragt] sie ängstlich.
"Ich kenne ihn nicht. Hier gibt es keine Bekannten, sei ganz ruhig. - Aber jetzt komm rasch; wir wollen einsteigen."
"Ist das dein Wagen?"
"Ja."
"Ein offener?"
"Vor einer Stunde war es noch so schön." Sie [eilen] hin; die junge Frau [steigt] ein.
"Kutscher," [ruft] der junge Mann.
"Wo ist er denn?" [fragt] die junge Frau. Franz [schaut] rings umher.
"Das ist unglaublich," [ruft] er, "der Kerl ist nicht zu sehen."

¹⁹⁵Franz K.Stanzel, A Theory of Narrative, translated by Charlotte Goedsche (Cambridge, 1984), p.65.

"Um Gotteswillen!" [ruft] sie leise.
"Wart' einen Augenblick, Kind; er ist sicher da."
Der junge Mann [öffnet] die Tür zu dem kleinen
Wirtshause; an einem Tisch mit ein paar anderen
Leuten [sitzt] der Kutscher; jetzt [steht] er
rasch auf.
"Gleich, gnä' Herr," [sagt] er und [trinkt]
stehend sein Glas Wein aus. (E I, p.297)

No alterations whatsoever are needed in the opening paragraph of Chekhov's В родном углу to recognise its affinity with drama. Here Chekhov uses simple 'stage-directions' to 'set the scene':

Донецкая дорога. Невеселая станция, одиноко
белеющая в степи, тихая, со стенами, горячими от
зноя, без одной тени и, похоже, без людей.
(IX, p.313)

In the theatre, stage-directions are used to specify the setting of a scene and to create a particular ambience. Chekhov, like Schnitzler, adapts them for use in their narrative prose with the same objective in mind.

In drama the 'aside' performs the role of a signal to the audience that the following 'speech' is a verbalisation of the character's thoughts. In the narrative works of Chekhov and Schnitzler, this device is occasionally employed to distinguish between the public and the private persona of a character. A technique which derives inspiration from its dramatic use, it again highlights the lasting influence which the theatre had on both authors. By avoiding potentially cumbersome narrative phrases introducing passages of direct speech and thought, the aside enables Chekhov and Schnitzler to shift effortlessly between an internal and external perspective. In Дома, for example, Chekhov uses parenthetical asides to allow the central character to articulate his private thoughts while reprimanding his son out loud:

Каждый человек имеет право пользоваться только
своим собственным добром, ежели же он берет
чужое, то...он нехороший человек! (Не то я ему

говору! то-подумал Евгений Петрович.) [...] Собачку ты мне подарил, она теперь моя, и я могу делать с ней все, что хочу; но ведь табаку я не дарил тебе! Табак мой! (Не так я ему объясняю! - подумал прокурор. - Не то! Совсем не то!) [...] ...ты куришь...это нехорошо! Если я курю, то из этого еще не следует, что курить можно. Я курю и знаю, что это неумно, браню и не люблю себя за это...(Хитрый я педагог! - подумал прокурор.) (VI, p.100)

Schnitzler's use of the 'aside' in Leutnant Gustl is similar:

"Bitte sehr!"...
 "Geduld, Geduld!" Was sagt der Kerl? "Nur ein bisschen Geduld!" Dem muß ich doch antworten...
 "Machen Sie doch Platz!"
 "Na, Sie werden's auch nicht versäumen!" Was sagt er da? Sagt er das zu mir? Das ist doch stark! Das darf ich mir nicht gefallen lassen!
 "Ruhig!"
 "Was meinen Sie?" Ah, so ein Ton? Da hört sich doch alles auf! "Stoßen Sie nicht!"
 "Sie, halten Sie das Maul!" Das hätt' ich nicht sagen sollen, ich war zu grob... (GW I p.343)¹⁹⁶

The use of dramatic features like episodes, dramatic presentation, stage-directions, and asides in their narrative prose reveals the extent to which Chekhov and Schnitzler as writers were influenced by the theatre. The incorporation of dramatic techniques into their prose works exemplifies the eclectic nature of their literature as a whole.

¹⁹⁶Note, however, that Chekhov and Schnitzler differ in their orthographical presentation of the 'aside'. Where the main body of text in Дома conveys Bykovskii's vocalised speech, and his unvocalised thoughts are bracketed, in Leutnant Gustl, the 'parenthetical' phrases convey Gustl's vocalised speech and are differentiated from the main text containing his unspoken thoughts by italics, (quotation marks in the above text). This underlines the general emphasis on the external and the internal that we have noticed elsewhere in Chekhov and Schnitzler respectively.

5.4.2 Contextually determined Categories

The thematic diversity that we encounter in the stories of Schnitzler and particularly of Chekhov makes any attempt at thematic subcategorisation a daunting task. The majority of their stories, dealing with a variety of topics which include love, death, human relationships and emotions, self-fulfilment and failure, social and moral issues, are thematically heterogeneous. At the same time they share certain distinctive features which enable them to be loosely grouped together. Though fictional, they are also largely realistic in the sense that they depict events which are potentially recognisable in the ordinary experience of life. They tend toward a serious subject matter, and depict situations and events contemporaneous with turn-of-the-century society. A number of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories do not share all of these features, belonging rather to narrative categories which are best described by reference to other, more distinctive, context-related characteristics. These warrant special attention.

Among the stories under consideration in this thesis, there are comparatively few comic narratives. Chekhov's liking for the comic story diminished in later years as his interest in serious literature grew. In the latter part of his life, Chekhov, like Schnitzler throughout his life, confined what comedy he did write mainly to works for the stage.¹⁹⁷ The few comic stories that we find among Chekhov's later narrative work and Schnitzler's narrative work as a whole represent rare departures from the kind

¹⁹⁷ Among Chekhov's most famous comedies are the one-acters Медведь, Юбилей and Предложение, and the full-length plays, Чайка and Вишнёвый сад. The best known of Schnitzler's comedies include the Anatol- cycle, Halbwei, Literatur, Komtesse Mizi oder der Familientag, Reigen, Zwischenspiel, Fink und Fliederbusch, Komödie der Verführung and Professor Bernhadi.

of narrative they were most used to writing. Only three comic stories, Отрывок. История одного торгового предприятия, and Рыбья любовь, were completed in Chekhov's mature period, and all three in 1892. They are light-weight works which Chekhov himself significantly deemed unworthy for inclusion in the Marks edition of his complete works. They recall the 'frivolous' style of the early Chekhov in their use of absurd situations and farcical effects. Likewise, Schnitzler's work contains few overtly comic stories, Die kleine Komödie and Ekzentrik being perhaps the two most obvious. Die kleine Komödie, like Chekhov's 1892 comedies, relies on farcical and contrived effects for its humour. However, Schnitzler introduces a more serious tone into the story by touching on such moral and philosophical problems as those posed by class divisions, and by the conflict between reality and illusion. The tragicomedy, juxtaposing, as here, the comic with the serious, is thus a significant category in the narrative work not just of Schnitzler but of Chekhov too. The combination underpins their view of the world in which opposed forces coexist side by side, a world where life and death, love and hate, health and sickness, reality and illusion, beauty and ugliness, fundamentals and trivia, strive to establish a harmonious balance.¹⁹⁸

In Chekhov's and Schnitzler's tragicomic stories, potentially humorous situations are invested with tragic import. In Der Ehrentag, for example, the practical joke which the theatre staff plan to play on Roland and which, in other less traumatic circumstances, would have been highly amusing, fails to take into account Roland's sensitive disposition and culminates, tragically, in his

¹⁹⁸This accords with Wilpert's view. Stressing the notion of duality in 'tragicomedy, he speaks of the recognition 'von der Doppeldeutigkeit des Menschen, in dem Großes und Niedriges, Erhabenes und Lächerliches nebeneinander bestehen' (Wilpert, p.796).

suicide. That 'tragedy' can apparently grow out of 'comedy' so easily seems to bewilder those on the outside.¹⁹⁹ Just as Roland's suicide in Der Ehrentag comes as a shock to the perpetrators of the joke, so too does Fritz's suicide in Der Empfindsame prove to be a source of complete bewilderment to his friends: 'Daß er sich erschossen hat wegen dieser herzlosen Person', they exclaim, (speaking of the woman who had exploited Fritz's love simply as a cure for a voice complaint), 'das ist doch übertrieben und kaum zu begreifen' (E I, p.261). Equally perplexing is the way in which Nikitin in Учитель словесности sees his dreams of marital happiness eroded by domestic trivialities, or the way Belikov in Человек в футляре drives himself to death through exaggerated and unnecessary worry. Implicit in Chekhov's understanding of the tragicomic is the natural orientation of ordinary people towards the trivial in life and their failure to grasp what is important and worthwhile.²⁰⁰ In Крыжовник, Ivan Ivanych explains how his brother has spent his life in the pursuit of a single goal - to own an estate at the side of a lake and grow his own gooseberries. Although he finally purchases the house he has always wanted, reality turns out rather different from the dream. As he sits at home, eating his sour gooseberries, he is too proud and too worn-out to acknowledge that he has wasted his life in the effort. Here, as in Душечка, for instance, where Olga passively adheres to the views and interests of each successive companion, we see the pathetic element central

¹⁹⁹Interestingly, Chekhov's Три сестры and Schnitzler's Das weite Land both illustrate this whimsical and bewildering nature of tragicomedy. Both plays end with a duel in which an innocent man is killed for no real logical reason. In both cases this is seen by the other characters as futile and nonsensical.

²⁰⁰We see this clearly in Chekhov's plays too. Characters talk at each other about ideals they are often too complacent to put into effect. People waste their lives out of an inability and disinclination to act decisively. There is much talk but little resolve.

to Chekhov's concept of the tragicomic in life. Often too, Chekhov will deliberately undermine a potentially dramatic or poignant situation by inserting an incongruous or absurd remark, thus emphasising the juxtaposition of the significant and the trivial in all of life's episodes. When Poloznev, at a poignant moment in Моя жизнь, embraces Masha for the very first time, for example, we are told how he 'scratches his cheek on her hat-pin' (IX, p.241). In Гусев, at the solemn moment of Gusev's sea-burial, Chekhov describes the sailor's corpse 'like a radish or a carrot' (VII p.338). Such examples serve to reinforce what Chekhov sees as the constant occurrence of life's little ironies.

Pessimistic as many of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's works may be seen to be, there are few full-blown tragedies. It is in the combination of the serious and the comic, the significant and the trivial, that we, as readers, glimpse something of what they see as the futility and absurdity of life. Where Schnitzler sees such futility as basically inevitable, Chekhov believes that human beings have the ability to realise their full potential. The bitter irony, however, as Chekhov sees it, and it is in this that life seems most tragicomic, is that few ever succeed in doing so.

In contrast to the majority of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories, there are some which, by drawing on themes and situations of a fantastical or fanciful nature, are essentially anti-naturalistic, even neo-romantic in character. In his maturer work, it must be said, Chekhov becomes increasingly reluctant to depart from the frame of reference of the real world, limiting his use of fantasy primarily to those works written with a youthful readership in mind. One exception to this is his fanciful story Папи, in which Chekhov, like Schnitzler, uses the simplicity of the 'сказка' genre to examine a basic philosophical problem, as O'Bell puts it,

'the central issue in all moral philosophy: who is the truly superior man?'²⁰¹. Fantastical though the events of the story are, their contemporary setting gives the story a realistic edge. It does not thus belong within the fairytale tradition proper. Schnitzler, on the other hand, draws on fantasy more readily than Chekhov, yet likewise using his 'Märchen'-like works as a means of throwing new light on timeless philosophical problems. In such stories as Die drei Elixire, Die dreifache Warnung, and Um eine Stunde, allegory and symbols invest seemingly unrealistic events with significance and universal relevance. All the usual features of the 'Märchen' obtain:²⁰² characters function as universal types rather than as individuals, the temporal and geographical location of the stories is left vague, (there are few references to specific placenames and landmarks so numerous in the 'realistic' stories), and a sense of mystery and exoticism often seems to prevail. Such stories are thus no longer tied by any narrow socio-historical context, but occupy an indeterminate place in an imaginary world. In Die drei Elixire, for example, a story in which the hero sets out in search of

²⁰¹Leslie O'Bell, 'Čexov's Skazka: The Intellectual's Fairy Tale', Slavic and East European Journal, 25/iv(1981), 33-46 (p.34). Although Пари was first published under the title Сказка, O'Bell argues that 'this is a different creature from the literary fairy tales of the romantics' (p.33). Chekhov, she claims, uses the genre primarily as a means of conducting a philosophical debate. The story, written in 1889 at a time when Chekhov himself was searching for his own worldview, provides 'a particularly clear example of what Čexov was learning about the handling of ideas in this period' (p.45).

²⁰²Schnitzler's 'Märchen' on the whole conform to Wilpert's definition of the genre as a 'kürzere volksläufig-unterhaltende Prosaerzählung von phantastisch-wunderbaren Begebenheiten und Zuständen aus freier Erfindung ohne zeitlich-räumliche Festlegung' (Wilpert p.463).

a magic potion, the place of action is unknown,²⁰³ the protagonist is referred to as 'er' throughout, and we recognise a 'tripartite' symmetry that is characteristic of the conventional fairy-tale. (In how many fairy-tales from different origins do we encounter, for example, a device such as the granting of three wishes!). The same symmetry obtains in Die dreifache Warnung, as the youth three times ignores warnings not to proceed on his chosen path. In Um eine Stunde, the protagonist is identified not by his name but by the third person pronoun, and the people he meets by their physical or occupational characteristics; 'the angel of death', 'the philosopher', 'the sick man', 'the old woman', 'the condemned prisoner', that is, as types rather than as individuals. The exact geographical and temporal location of the story is not given, and, like Schnitzler's other fantasy stories, it is narrated in the third person in prose which is deliberately stylised and rhetorical. The world portrayed in Schnitzler's fantasy literature is a supernatural world in which there are no constraints on what is physically possible. The remoteness of this make-believe world enables Schnitzler to comment more effectively on the real world. Thus, by describing in Die drei Elixire his hero's search for a potion that will guarantee his lover's constancy, Schnitzler focuses attention on what he regards as the wider problem of man's insecurity in his relationships with women. (A more cynical interpretation of the story would be one that saw all women as incapable of absolute fidelity). In Um eine Stunde, suspension of time highlights his materialist view of the yearning of human beings to live life to the

²⁰³Only on the last of the protagonist's three journeys are we told that he wandered in 'den Wäldern des Orients' (E I, p.82). Later, we read that he and his companion 'weilten in Venedig, am Strande des Meeres' (E I, p.84). The function of both these references is symbolic rather than contextual, intended to evoke exotic and erotic associations respectively.

full. And again, In Die dreifache Warnung, Schnitzler expounds on what he sees as the defencelessness of humans before that 'Kraft', be it metaphysical or physiological, 'die am Anfang aller Tage war und weiter wirkt unaufhaltsam in die Ewigkeit durch alles Geschehen' (E II, p.10).

In view of the popularity of the folk-tale idiom in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century,²⁰⁴ it is surprising that only in his early years did Chekhov turn to fantasy in his literature.²⁰⁵ Only in his stories for children does Chekhov move into the realm of fantasy. In the best known of these, the relatively early Каштанка (1887), and the later Белолобый (1895), Chekhov creates an anthropomorphic, animal world. A dog-pup in the former, and a she-wolf and her pup in the latter, are ascribed human attributes. They talk, think, and feel like humans. The characters' animal exteriors are the only non-realistic element in what is otherwise a wholly realistic series of events. What happens in each of the stories, the reactions and emotions of the animals, pertain to the realm of human experience. As works for children, however, Каштанка and Белолобый bear witness to Chekhov's conception of literature as a vehicle of enlightenment and entertainment capable of reaching people of different age-groups.

Although Schnitzler did not indulge in children's fiction, we find several stories in his literature which

²⁰⁴See Jeffrey Brooks, 'Readers and Reading at the End of the Tsarist Era', in Literature and Society in Imperial Russia, edited by William M. Todd (Stanford, 1978), pp.97-151.

²⁰⁵One of the few exceptions is Сапожник и нечистая сила, not dissimilar to Pushkin's Гробовщик, in which Chekhov describes how a cobbler meets the devil. The supernatural world which Chekhov parodies turns out to be a dream. Unlike Schnitzler's fantastical works, therefore, this story lies within the referential frame of the real world.

may be described as 'mythological', 'legendary', and 'historical' narratives. Chekhov, for his part, tended not to use such forms. Along with his historical plays,²⁰⁶ such stories as Legende, Casanovas Heimfahrt, Abenteurernovelle, Die Hirtenflöte, Boxeraufstand, and Die Frau des Richters, are among those works which Schnitzler used to shed additional light on universal philosophical and moral problems as he saw them. He employs certain conventions associated with the historical tale, the legend, and the myth to invest his own preoccupations and concerns with the sense of timelessness and universal relevance characteristic of such genres. In stories like Legende and Die Hirtenflöte, this timelessness is primarily achieved through stylisation and symbolism. Legende takes place three thousand years ago in India, a country traditionally associated with oriental mythology. It is peopled with mythological stereotypes, princes, high-priests, gods, and contains various other associated images, such as the black and white marble temples, sacred rituals, long journeys and so on. Die Hirtenflöte makes similar use of stylised imagery and narrative, within, this time, an indefinite historical context, with a view to depicting Dionysia's quest for personal fulfilment as a universal human problem. It is thus that Schnitzler invests these seemingly remote and fanciful stories with a significance that has relevance both for the reader of Schnitzler's day and, indeed, for the

²⁰⁶For instance, Der grüne Kakadu, Paracelsus, Alkandis Lied, Der junge Medardus, Casanova, oder die Schwestern im Spa, Der Gang zum Weiher.

The majority of Schnitzler's historical stories, however, such as Boxeraufstand, Casanovas Heimfahrt, Die Frau des Richters dispense with mythical elements and draw on specific historical figures, places, and events.²⁰⁸ Philosophical theorising takes second place in the historical stories to studies in behavioural psychology. Thus in Casanovas Heimfahrt, we see the portrait of a man trying to come to terms with the problem of old age; in Boxeraufstand, a prisoner grapples with the prospect of imminent execution; in Die Frau des Richters, we see the forces of passion, jealousy, and revenge at work. The historical dimension in all such stories allows the reader to view universal human experience from a distance. Along with his mythical stories, they bring variety into his literary work, and enable the reader to examine the human condition in terms other than those provided by experience of contemporary life. In this respect, Schnitzler shows greater diversity than Chekhov. Where Schnitzler searches the mythological, fantastical, and historical world for material that sheds new light on human experience,

²⁰⁷ Schnitzler underlines the universality of the issues dealt with in these stories by adopting a literary style which is reminiscent of earlier literary genres and styles. Take, for instance, the opening paragraph of Die Hirtenflöte. Its factual, somewhat convoluted style reminds one of Kleist's historical novellas: 'Ein Mann aus wohlhabender Familie, der sich als Jüngling in städtischer und ländlicher Gesellschaft vielfach umgetan und allerlei Wissenschaften und Künste als Liebhaber betrieben hatte, unternahm in reiferen Jahren Reisen in ferne Lande und kehrte erst mit ergrauenden Haaren in die Heimat wieder' (E II, p.11). There are also similarities with the Middle High German epic in its emphasis on adventure, quest, and violence.

²⁰⁸ The beginning of Die Frau des Richters, for example, defines the temporal, geographical and social context of the story explicitly: 'Nach zweiunddreißigjähriger Regierung, im siebenundfünfzigsten Jahre seines Lebens, wurde Karl Eberhard XVI, Herzog von Sigmaringen, im Hause der Gartenmägdelein, und zwar dem Gerüchte nach in den Armen des allerjüngsten, von einem plötzlichen Tode ereilt' (E II, p.382).

Chekhov chooses the tangibility of contemporary reality.

5.5 The Novel

Although it is mainly the shorter narrative prose of Chekhov and Schnitzler under consideration in this thesis, it seems expedient at least to mention both men's experience of the novel as a potentially useful literary genre, in order to highlight further their attitudes to literature in general. Even among the longer prose works of both men, their use of the novel was comparatively rare. Apart from his early, largely unsuccessful Драма на охоте (1884), Chekhov never completed a full-length novel, although a number of his stories, Три года, Моя жизнь, Дуэль, for example, are sufficiently long and novel-like to be tentatively so regarded.²⁰⁹ Schnitzler, on the other hand, wrote two novels, Der Weg ins Freie (1905-07), and Therese (1928), and an unfinished autobiography, Jugend in Wien (1915-18). These occupy an exclusive and prominent place in Schnitzler's narrative work as a whole. Together, they challenge the notion that Schnitzler was only competent as a writer of small-scale fiction. Though different from each other in content and

²⁰⁹See footnote 162. Chekhov often toyed with the idea of writing a novel. On the 9 October 1888, for example, he writes to Grigorovich: 'Хочется писать роман, есть чудесный сюжет, временами охватывает страстное желание сесть, и приняться за него, но не хватает, по-видимому, сил' (III, p.17). What Chekhov envisaged for his novel was, significantly, a series of separate 'рассказы', to include У Зелениных and Письмо, linked by a common idea and by common characters, to be called Рассказы из жизни моих друзей. In a letter of the 11 March 1889 to Suvorin, Chekhov describes his plan thus: 'пишу его в форме отдельных, законченных рассказов, тесно связанных между собою общностью интриги, идеи и действующих лиц. У каждого рассказа особое заглавие. Не думайте, что роман будет состоять из ключев. Нет, он будет настоящий роман, целое тело, где каждое лицо будет органически необходимо' (III, pp.177-78). Chekhov's plans never materialised. It is interesting that Schnitzler's novel Der Weg ins Freie was originally conceived along similar lines, though as a five act comedy play, to be entitled Die Entrüsteten.

form, both works belong unequivocally in the novel genre. Therese. Eine Chronik eines Frauenlebens, arguably the less successful of the two because of its lack of thematic and structural variety, charts Therese's physical and psychological demise in a hostile, patriarchal society by means of a series of cameo-like episodes. With the exception of Therese herself, whose life-story forms the only real focus of interest in the novel, the characters are sketchily portrayed and only then in so far as they illuminate Therese's development. In Therese, we do not find the complexity of plot and characterisation which we normally associate with the genre of the novel. Divided, however, into over a hundred short sections, the novel is one of Schnitzler's most graphic examples of the episodic narrative.

In terms of plot, structure, and characterisation, Schnitzler's earlier novel, Der Weg ins Freie, is a more conventional work and is essentially more complex and

compelling than Therese.²¹⁰ It is also more autobiographical than most of his other works. Schnitzler exploits the scope of the novel genre to explore in depth not just one but several main characters, together with several important issues, - anti-semitism, love, moral responsibility, art, politics. The complexity of characterisation and theme lends resonance to the novel. This is further enhanced by its broad geographical and temporal scope. The action takes place in a variety of locations over about a year. In Der Weg ins Freie, Schnitzler, the social critic, places individual events against a wider social background, providing a detailed critique of Viennese bourgeois society at the turn-of-the-century.

It is mainly in the broad range of themes in Der Weg ins Freie and in its complexity of characterisation that the novel differs not just from Schnitzler's other

²¹⁰Schnitzler himself saw the novel as the pinnacle of his literary achievement. In a diary entry of the 6 January 1906, Schnitzler even places it 'auf der großen Linie der deutschen Romane', alongside 'Meister, Heinrich, Buddenbrooks'. Clearly, Schnitzler enjoyed writing the novel and felt confident about its prospects. (See, for example, Schnitzler's diary entry of 2 June 1908, and his letter to Ludwig Fulda of 25 August 1904 (B I, p.488). On 4 July 1908, soon after finishing the novel, he writes to Georg Brandes, 'wie schön war dieser Roman, - eh ich ihn geschrieben habe! - Jetzt aber, da er fertig ist, schätz ich ihn höher als alles was ich bisher gemacht-' (B I, p.580). That Schnitzler thought highly of his novel is evidenced by an incident in which Hofmannsthal's apparent indifference to it led to a serious breach in their friendship. After having left a copy of Der Weg ins Freie 'halb zufällig, halb absichtlich' on a train, Hofmannsthal asked Schnitzler for a second copy. Insulted by Hofmannsthal's tactlessness, Schnitzler wrote back on the 2 November 1910, 'aber wenn Ihr auf Neuerwerbung dieses Buches abzielender Wunsch, der ja gewiß liebenswürdig und taktvoll gemeint war, Ihrer feinen Feder wie unter einem dämonischen Zwang so ganz ins Gegenteil geraten mußte, so ist mir das ein Beweis, daß die gewiß nichts weniger als oberflächlichen Gründe für Ihr unglückliches Verhältnis zu meinem Roman auch heute noch fortbestehen und ein Versuch von Ihrer Seite sich zu dieser persönlichsten meiner Schöpfungen in ein neues Verhältnis zu setzen vorläufig nur wenig Aussicht auf Erfolg haben dürfte' (B I, p.632).

narrative works but also from Chekhov's longer 'повести', in which he came closest to writing a serious novel. His wish to do so was thwarted partly because Chekhov was naturally inclined towards the shorter literary forms, and partly because, in terms of time and effort involved, novels were less lucrative than short narratives. Chekhov's poor state of health further militated against the kind of strenuous work involved in writing a novel. Perhaps also a reluctance to challenge the legacy of such novelists as Gogol', Turgenev, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy deterred him from the task. Had Chekhov lived longer, it may be he would have improved on the comparatively unconvincing Драма на охоте written earlier in his life. As it was, with the exception of Остров Сахалин, a lengthy sociological study and account of Chekhov's trip to the Siberian penal colony, Chekhov devoted himself entirely to small-scale fiction. Although Schnitzler wrote more longer works than Chekhov, his experience of the novel was not so very different from that of his Russian counterpart. In spite of his satisfaction with Der Weg ins Freie, Schnitzler, like Chekhov, continued to concentrate on relatively small-scale fiction and drama. Jugend in Wien and Therese were the only two significant exceptions to emerge in later years.

Taken as a whole, however, the literature of Chekhov and Schnitzler illustrates the widespread use of small-scale literary forms, notably the stage-play and the short story. The reason for this was partly pragmatic: short works were quicker to write and thus yielded greater financial rewards; partly sociological: emphasis on the shorter literary forms reflected the instability of European society at the turn-of-the-century; and partly historical: the emergence of Modernism in Europe came in response to the desire to break with the literary traditions of the past and to find new literary forms and modes of expression.

Chekhov's and Schnitzler's choice of similar narrative categories reflected their common approach to literature.

The stories under consideration here, be they 'рассказы' or 'Novellen', 'повести' or 'Erzählungen', share certain formal and thematic features. Most of their stories are substantially shorter than about twenty thousand words. Many of them specify narrative subcategories in the title or subtitle, naming the apparent author of the text as a means of providing the reader with information about the text and of creating a sense of distance between it and the real author. This concern for objectivity supports their use of other categories such as the frame-narrative, and the epistolary and diary stories. Other shared features such as the episodic narrative, direct speech and thought, 'stage-directions', reflect the enduring influence of the theatre on both men.

The stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler display a thematic diversity which makes it difficult to categorise them in anything but the broadest of groups. Most of the stories are 'realistic', serious, and contemporaneous with turn-of-the-century society. Prevalent also is the number of tragi-comic stories combining elements of the serious and the absurd, and reinforcing both men's view of the paradoxical in life. In his use of fantastical and folkloristic tales, of mythological and historical stories, and in his two full-length novels, Schnitzler displays a broader range of narrative subcategories than Chekhov. All of Schnitzler's works are intended for adult consumption, however, by contrast with the small number of stories which Chekhov wrote primarily with children in mind.

That the literature of Chekhov and Schnitzler as a whole is marked by an affinity with small-scale forms bears witness to a similar artistic attitude. The

emphasis both men placed on the small-scale narrative was innovative in its day and reflected the direction that literature was to take in the future. In spite of the differences, many similarities exist in their use of narrative categories. The fact that both men were writing independently of each other, and were nurtured on different cultural traditions, makes these similarities all the more interesting and remarkable.

CHAPTER 6
STYLISTIC ECLECTICISM

In a letter of 4 October 1888 to A.P.Pleshcheev, Chekhov writes:

Я боюсь тех, кто между строк ищет тенденции и кто хочет видеть меня непременно либералом или консерватором. [...] Я хотел бы быть свободным художником и - только... Мое святое святых - это человеческое тело, здоровье, ум, талант, вдохновение, любовь и абсолютнейшая свобода... (III, p.11)

And in a rare interview with Georg S.Viereck towards the end of Schnitzler's life, Schnitzler asserts:

Glücklicherweise gibt es kein philosophisches System, das die Vielfalt des Weltalls erschöpft. Gerade diese Vielfalt des Lebens, die sich jeder dauernden Einteilung entzieht, läßt mich täglich fröhlich atmen. [...] Selbst wenn unsere Handlungen im Leben bis zu einem gewissen Grad vorherbestimmt sind, in der Kunst sind wir frei, in der Kunst können wir wählen.²¹¹

Both assertions testify to the importance Chekhov and Schnitzler attached to the notion of artistic autonomy. This was demonstrated in the plurality of theme and style in their works, rendering any attempt to categorise their works under a single literary heading practically impossible. Their eclectic approach to literary creation allowed them to employ methods and techniques drawn from different literary traditions, for in their view, to impose constraints on literature was to deny the central thesis of artistic autonomy. Neither Chekhov nor Schnitzler considered themselves to be adherents of any single literary movement. Both wrote from within the

²¹¹Georg S.Viereck, 'Die Welt Arthur Schnitzlers', in Schnitzler: Materialien, pp.19-24 (p.19, p.20). In another interview, this time with Paul Wilhelm, Schnitzler expresses the opinion 'daß wirklich vernünftige Menschen auf Schulen oder Richtungen gar kein Gewicht legen werden. Es wird zu allen Zeiten nur auf die Persönlichkeiten ankommen' (Paul Wilhelm, 'Paul Wilhelm bei Arthur Schnitzler', in Schnitzler: Materialien, pp.14-16 (p.15).

Realist tradition, portraying people and events in a way that strove after authenticity. This meant, however, employing techniques variously associated with other literary movements, namely Impressionism, Naturalism, and Symbolism.²¹² Chekhov rarely refers explicitly to literature under such rubrics, preferring simply to divide literary works into 'те которые [ему] нравятся, и те, которые [ему] не нравятся'.²¹³ Schnitzler likewise reacted instinctively against strict categories, and objected to being included in the Jung Wien group because of the predominantly negative and narrow associations with 'Dekadenz', 'Ästhetentum', and 'melancholische Spielerei', it had come to acquire. To append to either Chekhov or Schnitzler any single such label would be to ignore the essentially diverse nature of their work. It is the aim of this chapter to examine the extent to which this stylistic variety is reflected in their stories, and thus determine their level of commitment to the notion of artistic autonomy.

6.1 Impressionism: Emphasis on Psychology and Mood.

At the time that Chekhov and Schnitzler were writing, the term 'literary Impressionism' was not in common use. Bahr's remarks on Mach's Analyse der Empfindungen,

²¹²Perhaps most representative of comments about stylistic eclecticism in Chekhov and Schnitzler are those made by Lakšin and Rey respectively: 'Chekhov', writes Lakšin, 'remained true to realistic, artistic content, to the truth of life, and therefore the search for new forms of expressivity did not carry him to symbolism, naturalism, or impressionism properly speaking, but noticeably enlarged the stock of his artistic means' (V.Lakšin, 'An Incomparable Artist', in Anton Čexov as a Master of Story-Writing, edited by Leo Hulanicki and David Savignac (Mouton, 1976), pp.91-106 (p.103)). Rey writes of Schnitzler, 'wir verzichten bewußt darauf, ihn als Repräsentant [sic] irgendeines -ismus abzustempeln, sondern versuchen vielmehr der Mannigfaltigkeit und Widersprüchlichkeit seiner Gedanken gerecht zu werden' (William H.Rey, 'Die geistige Welt Arthur Schnitzlers', Wirkendes Wort, 16(1966), 180-94 (p.182)).

²¹³Letter to I.L.Leont'ev-Shcheglov, 22 March 1890 (IV, p.45).

stressing the internalisation of the external on the one hand, and atmosphere and mood on the other, are nevertheless applicable to much of the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler.

Alle Trennungen sind hier aufgehoben, das Physikalische und das Psychologische rinnt zusammen, Element und Empfindung sind eins, das Ich löst sich auf und alles ist nur eine ewige Flut, die hier zu stocken scheint, dort eiliger fließt, alles ist nur Bewegung von Farben, Tönen, Warmen, Drucken, Räumen und Zeiten, die auf der anderen Seite, bei uns herüber, als Stimmungen, Gefühle und Willen erscheinen.²¹⁴

As medical practitioners interested in psychology and influenced by the scientific advances in Europe and America, both Chekhov and Schnitzler turned to methods and techniques associated with Impressionism in an attempt to capture the interrelationship between the physical and the psychological world.²¹⁵ As writers, Chekhov and Schnitzler are 'artists of the soul' exploring the hidden recesses of the human psyche; as such they may be seen to belong to the Impressionist

²¹⁴Hermann Bahr, 'Impressionismus' (1903), in Die Wiener Moderne, edited by Gotthart Wunberg (Stuttgart, 1982), pp.257-59 (p.259). Castle sees the Jung Wien writers as the major exponents of that style of writing wherein it is no longer a question, 'die Welt zu beschreiben, wie sie ist, sondern die Empfindungen, die sie im Innenleben des einzelnen auslöst, wiederzugeben' (Geschichte der deutschen Literatur in Österreich-Ungarn, edited by Eduard Castle (Vienna, 1937), cited in O'Brien, p.88).

²¹⁵May draws attention to Chekhov's grasp of this interrelationship when he argues that Спать хочется and Архиепей 'make use of another significant modern short story technique: focussing on reality as an ambiguous mixture of the psychic and the external' (May, p.153). Driver also remarks on the 'interlocking relationship between the internal and external world' in Schnitzler, who, she argues, made it 'one of his major themes' (Driver, p.118). She stresses the fluidity with which Schnitzler varies the narrative perspective as indicative of the fluid relationship between the external and the internal as a whole.

6.1.1 Narrative Perspective

The attention both Chekhov and Schnitzler pay to the portrayal of human psychology reflects an affinity with the concerns of Impressionism. Both men seek ways of reproducing the inner consciousness of the individual and find that the selective use of different narrative perspectives is one of the more effective. External perspectives alternate with internal ones to establish a close relationship between the physical and psychical worlds. By means of this changing narrative perspective they are able to plumb new depths of psychological insight, conveying a view of the world as perceived and experienced by one individual, and thus revealing

²¹⁶The emphasis on human psychology is what many critics see as Chekhov's and Schnitzler's greatest link with literary Impressionism. Golubkov, for example, mentions Chekhov's 'extensive psychological landscape and lyrical digressions' among 'the varied means which further the revelation of human psychology' in his work (V.V.Golubkov, 'Čexov's Lyrico-Dramatic Stories', in Hulanicki and Savignac (editors), pp.135-68 (p.137)). As early as 1904, Landsberg mentions Schnitzler's emphasis on 'seelische Zustände' and 'Stimmung' as manifestations of his 'psychological impressionism,' (Landsberg, pp.16,40). Driver draws a parallel between Chekhov's and Schnitzler's concern with human psychology: 'In theme and impressionist technique Schnitzler was closer to Chekhov than to any other Russian author. Both men were doctors concerned with the psychological make-up of the figures about whom they wrote' (Driver, p.60). Among the main features of literary Impressionism, Vajda lists 'tonal painting, musicality, synesthesia and the modern stylistic means for illustrating the fine shades of psychological states: interior monologue, stream of consciousness, 'style indirect libre' (György M.Vajda, 'The Structure of the Symbolist Movement', in The Symbolist Movement in the Literature of European Languages, edited by Anna Balakian (Budapest, 1982), pp.29-41 (p.36)). By these criteria, therefore, many of the stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler are justifiably Impressionist in character.

something of that person's inner being.²¹⁷

The most common narrative perspective encountered in the stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler is that of the 'omniscient' third-person narrator. Predominantly dispassionate, and unobtrusive, the omniscient narrator is responsible for the simple narration of the story, manipulating his characters as he chooses, and apparently conveying only that information about their psychological states which he feels the reader should know. The third person narrator thus provides an external view of the character's internal state. Not directly involved in the events of the story, he rarely ventures to express his own opinions. Judgemental intrusions of this kind are usually made by what Stanzel calls the 'teller-characters', that is, those 'teller-narrators' who take the part of fictional characters in the plot.²¹⁸ The omniscient narrator has at his disposal various means of revealing the psychology of his characters. These include the use of direct and indirect speech, passages of which occur regularly in the prose of both Chekhov and Schnitzler. Such passages contribute significantly towards the 'conversationalist tone' of much of the narrative, providing not just stylistic variety, but also an opportunity for the reader to formulate an

²¹⁷For a detailed discussion of narrative perspective, see especially Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, second edition (Chicago, London, 1983), and Franz K. Stanzel, *A Theory of Narrative*, translated by Charlotte Goedsche (Cambridge, 1984). With reference specifically to Chekhov's later stories (1895-1904), Chudakov refers to a 'multi-layered narrative consciousness'. 'In this last period', Chudakov writes, 'Chekhov increases the distance between the author and the narrator and creates a multi-layered narrative consciousness; the controlling perspective is in constant and unpredictable flux' (Chudakov, p.ix).

²¹⁸Certain other features, says Stanzel, characterise such narrators. 'A teller-character', he writes, 'narrates, records, informs, writes letters, includes documents, refers to his own narration, addresses the reader, comments on that which has been narrated, and so on' (Stanzel, p.144).

understanding of the characters on the basis of the characters' own utterances and reported utterances. The third-person narrator commonly introduces these with explicit words of speech, such as 'he said...', 'she cried...', 'they exclaimed...', and so on.²¹⁹ The narrator is present in a technical capacity, directing the dialogue and selecting from the total range of potential conversations those few exchanges that reveal most about the characters.

In order to shed further light on the psychological state of the characters, the omniscient narrator can make explicit reference to their emotions, thoughts and feelings. In Chekhov and Schnitzler, we frequently come across such phrases as 'почувствовал себя...' 'имел чувство, что...', 'испытывает чувство, как будто...', 'er fühlte,...', 'sie hatte die Empfindung, daß...', 'es kam ihr vor, daß...', providing direct information about a character's internal condition. The narrator thus acts as the medium through which the reader may glimpse from the outside the private world of the individual. In the following passages from На подводе and Die Fremde, we see how direct references to the characters' emotions are employed to provide revealing psychological insights:

[Марья] услышала вдруг игру на рояле, голос отца, почувствовала себя, как тогда, молодой, красивой, нарядной, в светлой, теплой комнате, в кругу родных: чувство радости и счастья вдруг охватило ее, от восторга она сжала себе виски ладонями и окликнула нежно, с мольбой:

- Мама!

И заплакала, неизвестно отчего. (IX, p.342)

Während des ganzen Gesprächs in dem kühlen, sonntagstillen Zimmer hatte Albert die Empfindung, als wäre er in eine Gegend gekommen, über die durch lange Zeit heftige Stürme gejagt hatten, und die nun eine große Sehnsucht nach

²¹⁹Stanzel calls these introductory words of speech 'narrative elements...which function as stage directions' (Stanzel, p.65).

Ruhe atmete. Und als er später die graue Treppe hinunterschritt, ward ihm nicht die beseligende Empfindung eines erfüllten Wunsches, sondern nur das Bewußtsein, daß er in eine wohl wundersame, aber ungewisse und dunkle Epoche seines Lebens eingetreten war. Und wie er so durch den Sonntag spazierte...an manchen fröhlichen und unbekümmerten Menschen vorbei, da fühlte er, daß über ihm ein Geschick anderer und besonderer Art zu walten begann. (My emphasis) (E I, p.554)

Alternatively, the omniscient third person narrator may simply allude to the psychological states of the characters by means of impersonal and comparative phrases, depicting reality in terms of the characters' own perceptions, and allowing the reader greater knowledge of the character's empirical self. As examples of this kind of indirect allusion to psychological experience, frequently employed by Chekhov and Schnitzler to emphasise its essentially personal nature, we may cite such constructions and phrases as '...ему казалось, что...', '...было, как будто...', 'словно', and their German equivalents, 'ihr war, als...', 'es schien ihm, daß...', 'es war, als ob...'. In the last few lines of Ein Abschied for example, as Alfred enters the room in which his lover has just died, such phrases are repeatedly employed to convey not the objective reality, but Alfred's own, highly subjective and personal perceptions. Concerned primarily with the psychological portrait of his hero, Schnitzler aims at a high level of psychological naturalism:

Er nickte ihr zu, als nähme er Abschied von ihr und sie konnte es sehen. Jetzt wollte er gehen, aber nun war es ihm, als hielte sie ihn mit diesem Lächeln fest. Und es wurde mit einemmal ein verächtliches, fremdes Lächeln, das zu ihm zu reden schien, und er konnte es verstehen. Und das Lächeln sagte: Ich habe dich geliebt, und nun stehst du da wie ein Fremder und verleugnest mich. Sag' ihm doch, daß ich die Deine war, daß es 'dein' Recht ist, vor diesem Bette niederzuknien und meine Hände zu küssen.- [...] Aber er wagte es nicht. [...] Dann eilte er

durchs Vorzimmer und über die Treppe hinab...und sein Schritt wurde immer schneller, und es trieb ihn aus der Nähe des Hauses, und er eilte tief beschämt durch die Straßen; denn ihm war, als dürfte er nicht trauern wie die anderen, als hätte ihn seine tote Geliebte davongejagt, weil er sie verleugnet. (My emphasis) (E I, pp.253-54)

In a passage from По делам службы, Chekhov adopts a similar technique in order to convey the subjective perceptions of Lyzhin, as he imagines Lesnitskiĭ and Loshadin walking in the snow:

Следователь спал непокойно. Было жарко, неудобно, и ему казалось во сне, что он не в доме Тауница и не в мягкой чистой постели, а всё еще в земской избе, ни сене, а слышит, как вполголоса говорят понятые: ему казалось, что Лесницкий близко, в пятнадцати шагах. Ему опять вспомнилось во сне, как земский агент, серноволосый, бледный, в высоких запыленных сапогах, подходил к конторке бухгалтера. (Это наш земский агент). Потом ему представилось, будто Лесницкий и сотский Лошадин шли в поле по снегу, бок о бок, поддерживая друг друга... они шли и подпевали:

-Мы идем, мы идем, мы идем.

Старик был похож на колдуна на опере, и оба в самом деле пели, точно в театре... (X, pp.98-99) (My emphasis)

Chekhov's and Schnitzler's frequent use of words and phrases of comparison like 'как', 'словно', 'будто', 'als' and 'wie', is also designed to convey to the reader the subjectivity of individual experience. Metaphors, comparisons and similes underline the idiosyncratic, highly subjective nature of the individual's personal impressions. In Убийство, for example, Jakov imagines devils astride his shoulders, (IX, p.151); to Mar'ia in Мужики it is 'как будто это вошли не люди, а чудовища' (IX, p.287); in Архиерей the congregation seems to the bishop to sway in the dark 'как море' (X, p.186); in Ионыч, the leaves of the maple trees in the moonlit cemetery seem to Startsev 'похожие на лапы' (X, p.31). By means of such correspondences, the narrator establishes a link between the external and internal world and provides

a window through which the reader can view a character's psychological condition more effectively.

In passages of interior monologue, the 'telling-narrator' plays a less conspicuous role, apparently withdrawing from the text to make way for a more immediate, and thus more authentic presentation of consciousness. There are several forms of the interior monologue, with much overlapping and consequent ambiguity, but it is the indirect interior monologue, or 'free indirect style' as it is sometimes known, which is the one most frequently adopted by Chekhov and Schnitzler.²²⁰ In such passages, the third person narrator is replaced by an experiencing character, by what Booth calls the 'centre of consciousness', the 'unacknowledged narrator' (Booth, p.153). The difference between the third person narrator and the narrator as an integral character is one between 'telling' and 'showing'. With the latter, emphasis is placed on the dramatisation, rather than the relation, of inner consciousness. Verbalising his unspoken thoughts in what Stanzel calls an 'illusion of immediacy' (Stanzel, p.141), the so-called reflector-character²²¹ reveals his inner being to the reader openly and directly. Thus the process of

²²⁰Indirect interior monologue is known by a variety of names including 'erlebte Rede', narrated monologue, figural narration, impersonal narration, scenic presentation and others. The variety of terms is often confusing.

²²¹This is Stanzel's own term which he adopts to convey the mimetic nature of the reflector-character's 'narration'. The technique involves 'the reflection of the fictional events through the consciousness of a character in the novel without narratorial comment' (Stanzel, p.48).

narration becomes a process of self-revelation.²²²

In grammatical terms, the indirect interior monologue takes the form of reported speech but dispenses with the introductory verbs of saying used by the omniscient narrator. The reflector-character articulates his thoughts in the third person, usually in the past tense, but also in the present on those occasions when greater immediacy is required. The illusion of authorial objectivity is preserved because events are revealed through the consciousness of the experiencing character. The adeptness with which Schnitzler, in particular, reveals the psychology of his characters through indirect interior monologue betokens a profound understanding of the workings of the human mind. The following passage from Die Nächste illustrates as well as any Schnitzler's ability to convey nuances of psychological experience. The internal perspective, reproducing Gustav's spontaneous thoughts, highlights his confusion and despair:

Gustav saß regungslos da und ließ sie reden... Wo war er da hingeraten! Er, der noch vor wenigen Monaten der Gatte einer tugendhaften Frau gewesen

²²² Stanzel is correct when he argues that immediacy, 'the illusion of direct insight into the character's thoughts' (Stanzel p.127), is the mainstay of internal narrative perspectives. The reflection rather than the narration of consciousness is implicit in interior monologue. 'In interior monologue', he writes, 'the reader encounters a self which...does not narrate or address a listener or a reader, but reflects its consciousness in its own momentary situation, including the reminiscences evoked by the situation' (p.212). Chudakov emphasises Chekhov's use of the indirect interior monologue, (Chudakov calls it 'double direct discourse'), as a means of 'subordinating narrative to the hero's perspective', adding that this was a characteristic feature particularly of those stories written in Chekhov's middle period (1888-94) (Chudakov, p.62). His early stories, Chudakov argues, are narrated by narrators who are generally 'not bound to any particular vantage point' (p.22) while those written in his third period (1894-1904) reflect a move away from the objectivity of the second period in having narrators who play an increasing role in the narrative structure and whose value judgements intrude into the narrative (pp72-77).

war, die ihm allein gehört und keinem vor ihm... Was wollte er da? Was hatte er mit der zu tun?... Wo war sein Verlangen, wo seine Wünsche?... Er stand auf, als wollte er sich entfernen. [...] Er betrachtete sie mit einem wütenden Blick. War es nur möglich, daß dieses erbärmliche Weib, das hundert Liebhaber gehabt, mit jeder Miene, mit jeder Bewegung, während sie ihm die höchste Wonne gab, die arme Tote, die jetzt verweste, geradezu nachgeäfft? Und er lag da neben ihr... Er schüttelte sich... (E I, pp.334-35)

Though less common in Chekhov, those passages of indirect interior monologue we do find in his work likewise reveal similar facets of character. The insights into Sofia's mind provided by Chekhov's use of the indirect interior monologue in Володя большой и Володя маленький, for example, reveal a woman who is making every effort to deceive herself:

Она была искренно весела и торжествовала. [...] ...сегодня же в загородном ресторане она убедилась наконец, что любит его страстно. Несмотря на свои пятьдесят четыре года, он был так строен, ловок, гибок, так мило каламбурил и подпевал цыганкам. Право, теперь старики в тысячу раз интереснее молодых, и похоже на то, как будто старость и молодость поменялись своими ролями. Полковник старше ее отца на два года, но может ли это обстоятельство иметь какое-нибудь значение, если, говоря по совести, жизненной силы, бодрости и свежести в нем неизмеримо больше чем в ней самой, хотя ей только двадцать три года? (VIII, p.214)

In both examples, third person narration slips almost unnoticed into indirect interior monologue. The transition from an external to an internal narrative perspective is deliberately ambiguous, and thus serves to underline further the fluid relationship between the physical and the psychological. Indirect interior monologue, as used by Chekhov and Schnitzler, aims at authenticity in the presentation of inner consciousness. Greatest psychological authenticity is achieved, however, by the direct interior monologue, otherwise known as the stream-of-consciousness technique, the most immediate of

internal perspectives.²²³ Mimesis is the guiding principle of the direct interior monologue, with the reflector-character revealing 'the content of [his] consciousness unwittingly, as it were' (Stanzel, p.226). The narrative mode is one of showing rather than telling, with emphasis on the enactment of the momentary situation, on what Stanzel calls the 'presentation of action in actu' (p.170). The events thus presented fall entirely within the character's own field of thought and vision. The reader, as he reads, inhabits the mind of the experiencing character. The stream-of-consciousness technique preserves the present tense and first person of direct speech, exactly reproducing the unvocalised utterances of the experiencing character.²²⁴ His thoughts are presented in free association, in language which is often colloquial and grammatically idiosyncratic. Thus slang words, unfinished sentences, interjections and exclamations are a common feature.²²⁵

Schnitzler's use of the indirect interior monologue in his narrative works, being among the earliest successful

²²³Much has been written about the stream-of-consciousness technique. See in particular Gerald Prince, Narratology: The Form and Functioning of Narrative, Janua Linguarum, Series Maior 108 (New York, Amsterdam, 1982), especially chapter one on narrating. See also Booth's remarks on 'Types of Narration' (Booth, chapter 6), and Stanzel's section on the presentation of consciousness (p.127 and passim). Also useful is Dorrit Cohn, 'Narrated Monologue: Definition of a Fictional Style', Comparative Literature, 18(1966), 97-112.

²²⁴Note that Prince makes a distinction between vocalised and non-vocalised direct discourse, 'between a case of free direct discourse when the character utters a series of sentences and a case where he formulates them without uttering them. The latter', Prince continues, 'constitutes what is often referred to as interior monologue' (Prince, p.49).

²²⁵Prince argues, for example, that 'when introduced as free direct discourse, a character's thoughts may be expressed in language which does not respect the rules of morphology and syntax. Punctuation is absent, grammatical forms are truncated, short incomplete sentences abound, and neologisms are frequent' (Prince, p.48). Much the same observation is made by Zenke (Zenke, p.23).

attempts at a truly authentic portrayal of the individual psyche, was highly original in its day. It also occurs more frequently in the works of Schnitzler than of Chekhov, where passages of genuine stream-of-consciousness are relatively rare.²²⁶ This reflects Chekhov's preference for a narrative approach in which emphasis is placed on external rather than internal narrative perspectives. Where Schnitzler seeks 'psychological interiorisation' by means of authentic reproduction of mental activity, Chekhov, in Stowell's words, accomplishes it 'through action and dialogue'.²²⁷ Schnitzler's inclination, on the other hand, to reveal the psychology of his characters from within, reflects the influence both of his own interest in psychiatry and of the Impressionist orientation of his literary peers in Vienna.

Schnitzler's desire to penetrate the mind of his characters is best seen in two novellas which rely exclusively on the stream-of-consciousness technique, Leutnant Gustl and Fräulein Else. Both stories consist almost entirely of a direct interior monologue which seeks to recreate the psychological experiences of each protagonist with as much authenticity as possible. The concept of free association is given its fullest expression in the verbatim reconstruction of the characters' thought sequences. Opening windows into the

²²⁶Golubkov maintains that in Tocka (1886) 'Iona's conversation with the horse is a conversation with an imaginary interlocutor and in essence is an internal monologue' (Golubkov, p.138). This view, however, ignores the fact that in genuine direct internal monologue the protagonist is a reflector-character rather than a character who narrates events. Moreover, free association plays a minimal role in Tocka. The story is narrated by a third person narrator, and Iona's thoughts and utterances take the form of direct speech introduced by verbs of saying.

²²⁷H. Peter Stowell, 'Chekhov into Film', in Clyman, pp.233-53 (p.233).

inner recesses of the mind, the stream-of-consciousness technique is particularly suitable for the characterisation of two such psychologically complex characters as Gustl and Else.²²⁸ Gustl emerges as emotionally insecure, puerile and chauvinistic, Else as a young woman confused by a combination of heterosexual, narcissistic, and incestuous urges. In the following passage where she undresses in front of the mirror, the immediacy of the internal perspective underlines her state of anxiety:

Keine Zeit mehr verlieren, nicht wieder feig werden. Herunter das Kleid. Wer wird der Erste sein? Wirst du es sein, Vetter Paul? Dein Glück, daß der Römerkopf nicht mehr da ist. Wirst du diese schönen Brüste küssen heute Nacht? Ah, wie bin ich schön. [...] Fort mit den Strumpfen, das wäre unanständig. Nackt, ganz nackt. [...] Ich werde mich ja zu Tod lachen über Dorsday. Da bin ich, Herr von Dorsday. Rasch auf die Post. Fünzigtausend. So viel ist es doch wert? Schön, schön bin ich! Schau' mich an, Nacht! Berge schaut mich an! Himmel schau' mich an, wie schön ich bin. Aber ihr seid ja blind. [...] Da sähe ich aus wie eine Verrückte. Aber Ihr sollt mich nicht für verrückt halten. Nur für schamlos sollt Ihr mich halten. Für eine Kanaille. [...] Ah, wie hübsch ist es, so nackt im Zimmer auf- und abzuspazieren. Bin ich wirklich so schön wie im Spiegel? Ach, kommen Sie doch näher, schönes Fräulein. Ich will Ihre blutroten Lippen küssen. Ich will Ihre Brüste an meine Brüste pressen. Wie

²²⁸The capability of direct internal monologue to reproduce complex inner states of mind is taken up by Diersch, among others: 'der innere Monolog', he writes, 'erweckt die Fiktion, als ob er alle Phänomene - und nur diese - registriere, die die Psyche der Gestalt durchziehen. In seiner konsequenten Ausformung versucht der innere Monolog die psychischen Vorgänge in jener abrupten, planlos-spontanen und amorphen Art nachzubilden, die für das halbbewußte und vorbewußte Denken, Fühlen und Wahrnehmen charakteristisch ist' (Manfred Diersch, Empiriekritizismus und Impressionismus (Berlin, 1977), p.94). It should be remembered, however, that in both Leutnant Gustl and Fräulein Else, Schnitzler successfully combines the psychological with the social. The character of Gustl becomes the means by which Schnitzler makes a satirical attack on the Habsburg military, while it is through Else that he exposes the latent barbarism of existing social mores.

Schade, daß das Glas zwischen uns ist, das kalte Glas. [...] O, ich bin keineswegs verrückt. Ich bin nur ein wenig erregt. [...] Denn die frühere Else ist schon gestorben. Ja, ganz bestimmt bin ich tot. Da braucht man kein Veronal dazu. (E II, pp.364-65)

Direct interior monologue, with its emphasis on the reproduction of inner consciousness, does not easily lend itself to the description of external events. Attempts to do so, as the following passage from Leutnant Gustl illustrates, often sound stilted and unconvincing. Gustl is seen here to articulate thoughts that sound both contrived and unnatural, in order that the reader may know what events are taking place in the physical world outside:

Da ist ja schon mein Kaffeehaus... auskehren tun sie noch... Na geh'n wir hinein...
[...] Wo ist denn der Kellner?...- He! Da kommt er aus der Küche... er schließt schnell in den Frack hinein... Ist wirklich nimmer notwendig!...
[...] Ah, da liegen ja Zeitungen... schon heutige Zeitungen?... Ob was drinsteht?... Was denn? - Mir scheint, ich will nachseh'n, ob drinsteht, daß ich mich umgebracht hab'! Haha! - Warum steh' ich denn noch immer?... Setzen wir uns da zum Fenster... Er hat mir ja schon die Melange hingestellt... So, den Vorhang zieh' ich zu... (E I, p.364)

The verbatim articulation of inner consciousness is occasionally interrupted by 'outside intrusions' designed to facilitate the narration of such 'physical' events as Gustl's confrontation with the baker, for instance, or Dorsday's meeting with Else. Intrusions of this kind take the form of utterances by characters other than the main centre of consciousness, (Gustl and Else respectively), and are indicated orthographically as in normal direct speech by punctuation marks and introductory verbs of speech. Such passages are the only concession to an otherwise unchanging internal perspective.

Unlike the experiencing-character of direct interior monologue, those playing the role of the first person

narrator is a 'teller-character' who observes from without and relates his story using the same narrative devices as those used by the omniscient narrator, (introductory verbs of saying, thinking, feeling etc.). The first-person narrator is, as Stanzel remarks, 'an identifiable character in the fiction,...embodied in the world of the characters' (Stanzel, p.90).²²⁹ This is the case whether or not the narrator is an actual participant in the story that he relates. In both Chekhov and Schnitzler the majority of first person narrators are in fact directly implicated in the events they narrate. In such stories, however, the focus of interest is centred on the narrator's perception of events rather than on the events themselves. The title of Chekhov's first person story Жена ironically belies the fact that it is the character of the narrator himself, not his wife, that interests us most. Natalia Gavrilovna serves mainly to throw the character of the narrator, Pavel Andreevich, into relief, and to illustrate the extent of his own egoism. We see this, for example, in the episode following her outburst at the dinner-party:

Вспышка жена напомнила мне нашу супружескую жизнь. Прежде, обыкновенно, после всякой вспышки нас неопределимо тянуло друг к другу, мы сходились и пускали в ход весь динамит, какой с течением времени скопился в наших душах. И теперь, после ухода Ивана Инваныча, меня сильно потянуло к жене. Мне хотелось сойти вниз и сказать ей, что ее поведение за чаем оскорбило меня, что она жестока, мелочна и со своим мещанским умом никогда не возвышалась до понимания того, что я говорю и что я делаю. Я долго ходил по комнатам, придумывая, что скажу ей, и угадывая то, что она мне ответит. (VII, p.468)

²²⁹Stanzel explains further that 'the first person narrator is distinguished from the authorial third person narrator by his physical and existential presence in the fictional world. [...] Everything that is narrated in the first person form is somehow existentially relevant for the first person narrator' (Stanzel, pp.90,98).

Similarly, Mathilde's story in Schnitzler's Die griechische Tänzerin is important not so much for what it says about the character of her husband, (who is ostensibly the main focus of her story), as for what it reveals about Mathilde's own insecurity. Both in its content and its delivery, we catch glimpses of a woman driven to despair through jealousy.

Limited by what Stanzel calls their 'horizon of perception and knowledge' (Stanzel, p.89), first person narrators are naturally subjective. The degree to which they invite the reader's trust and can be relied on for their honesty, differs from one character to the next, however. Where Alyekhin in О любви, for instance, invites trust from the reader because past experience has taught him to act rationally, the narrator of Andreas Thamyers letzter Brief invites scepticism, his emotional, self-deceiving approach undermining the validity of his arguments. The act of narration is a deliberate and premeditated process for diarists, letter-writers and other first-person narrators such as Nikolaï Stepanovich in Скучная история, for instance, Nikitin in Учитель словесности, Thamyers in Andreas Thamyers letzter Brief, the narrator in Blumen. Such 'self-conscious' writers select and order their thoughts with an imaginary readership in mind, revealing their inner selves through narratorial interpolations and comments, consciously creating and nurturing their own personal self-image for the benefit of the imagined addressee. This deliberate approach contrasts with that of the reflector-character of internal monologue, who reveals himself involuntarily, oblivious of any spectator.

One of the effects of the combination of different narrative perspectives in their prose is to highlight fluctuations in the emotional intensity of the characters. It is a common feature of both men's narrative work that shifts from an external to an

internal perspective, from 'telling' to 'showing', often coincide with an intensification of a character's emotional state.²³⁰ Changes of narrative perspective may thus act as a gauge of a character's psychological condition, a heightening of a character's emotional susceptibilities, whether through anger, sexual excitement, or fear, often being effected through a more immediate narrative perspective. It is no coincidence that internal perspectives are used at times when the characters themselves are at their most tense. We see this, for example, in Дама с собачкой when Gurov embraces Anna for the first time. As Gurov becomes emotionally charged by the thrill of a new illicit liaison, the narrative moves from an external perspective: 'и вдруг [Гуров] обнял ее и поцеловал в губы [...] и тотчас же он пугливо огляделся:', to an internal perspective: 'не видел ли кто?' (X, p.131). The shift to the interior monologue accentuates the intensity of a situation, which in Gurov's view, is fraught with both sensuality and danger. In Невеста, the narrative becomes more immediate as Nadia becomes increasingly anxious about her forthcoming marriage (X, p.206); in В овчарке, the same thing happens when Lipa begins to reflect on the violent death of her baby (IX, p.173). Such instances are not restricted to Chekhov's stories, indeed they are more common in Schnitzler's. In Der blinde Geronimo und sein Bruder, for example, Carlo's growing despair coincides with a move to indirect interior monologue:

Geronimo hielt inne, mitten in einer Melodie; es klang, als wäre seine Stimme und die Saiten zugleich abgerissen [...] In der Wirtstube

²³⁰Driver also stresses Schnitzler's use of different narrative perspectives to reflect the emotional fluctuations of his characters (Driver, pp.117-121). In her discussion of Spiel im Morgengrauen, she argues that 'the narrated monologue relates to Willi's perceptions and mental turmoil while the inner monologue is used for his fixations, when he is almost in a trance-like state' (p.118).

setzte er sich neben ihn. Was sollte er tun? Es blieb ihm nichts anderes übrig: er mußte noch einmal versuchen, den Bruder aufzuklären. (E I, p.379)

Passages of free association in Schnitzler are reserved for moments of greatest tension. In Spiel im Morgengrauen, as Willi realises the full consequences of failing to repay his debt to the consul, the narrative moves from an external perspective: 'nun wandte er [Willi] ihm [dem Konsul] einen scheuen Blick zu. Zurückgelehnt, den Hut vor sich auf der Decke, mit geschlossenen Augen, saß der Konsul da' (E II, p.543), through indirect interior monologue: 'wie mild, wie gütig sah er aus! Und der - trieb ihn in den Tod? Wahrhaftig, er schlief - oder stellte er sich so?' (ibid), to direct interior monologue: 'nur keine Angst, Herr Konsul, ich werde Sie nicht weiter belästigen. Sie werden Dienstag um zwölf Uhr Ihr Geld haben. Oder auch nicht. Aber in keinem Falle...', and back again, 'der Wagen hielt vor dem Kasernentor...' (ibid). Such changes of perspective are indicative of Willi's volatile and vascillatory emotional state.

It is a mark of the importance that both Chekhov and Schnitzler attached to the realistic presentation of human psychology, as well as of their common approach to literary creation, that narrative perspective is used by both men in roughly similar ways for the purpose of unveiling the psychological world of their characters. Their objective, one which they had in common with Impressionist writers at large, was to depict reality not just as observed from the outside, but also as seen and experienced by the individual, 'wie jeder sie

empfindet'.²³¹

6.1.2 Dream and Illusion

Chekhov's and Schnitzler's attempts to unveil the deep psychology of their characters include various other devices apart from the manipulation of narrative perspective. The depiction of dreams and fantasies, illusions and memories is part of this process. Even before the publication of Freud's Traumdeutung in 1900 and the advent of psychoanalysis as such, the dream had long been understood as an expression of the unconscious mind, providing insights into the preoccupations and concerns of the individual, and it is as such that dreams are employed in the literary work of Chekhov and Schnitzler. More numerous in Schnitzler's plays and stories than in Chekhov's, they give expression to the characters' deepest yearnings and anxieties, revealing facets of character only hinted at in their public lives. The notion of the dream as wish-fulfilment, which Freud

²³¹Hermann Bahr, 'Die Moderne' (1890), in Wunberg, Die Wiener Moderne, pp.189-91 (p.191). Chizhevskij reaffirms this view of reality in the Impressionist sense when he argues, 'die Wirklichkeit, die Ereignisse können deshalb nicht irgendwie objektiv gemessen und beurteilt werden, weil sie dem Menschen...in Form der Spiegelung in der Seele des jeweiligen Individuums [erscheinen]' (Dmitrij Tschizhevskij, 'Čekhov und die russische Literaturentwicklung', in Anton Chekhov, 1860-1960: Some Essays, edited by Tomas Eekman (Leiden, 1960), (p.306)). On the subject of Chekhov and Impressionism, see also Peter M.Bitsilli, Chekhov's Art: A Stylistic Analysis, translated by Toby W.Clyman and Edwina J.Cruise (Ann Arbor, 1983), especially chapter 4, and Karl D.Kramer, The Chameleon and the Dream (The Hague, 1970), pp.91ff.. Chudakov's Chekhov's Poetics (1983) is also useful.

immortalised in later writings²³², is one to which Schnitzler seemed to subscribe more readily than Chekhov, a fact borne out by the experience of many of his literary characters. In numerous stories and plays, including Ein Abschied, for example, Sterben, Frau Berta Garlan, Leutnant Gustl, Alkandis Lied, Paracelsus, Der Schleier der Beatrice, and Traumnovelle, the characters are seen to have dreams which enable them to act out and realise their innermost fantasies, and to possess, if only temporarily, what is denied them in the real world. Responding to what are usually sexually orientated neuroses, their dreams frequently use evocative imagery with overtly 'Freudian' overtones. This is illustrated in Berta's dream in Frau Berta Garlan (E I, pp.423-24), which represents a response to the sexual frustration she experiences in her waking life. The bizarre images comprising her dream, the appearance of Berta's attractive nephew in the subservient role of waiter, the image of Herr and Frau Martin locked in a passionate and public embrace, the sight of Frau Rupius spitting cherries at the stationmaster, all these reflect her yearning for sexual satisfaction and her disdain for that same authority and convention which, in real life, impedes its fulfilment. The dreamlike experiences of Fridolin and Albertine in Traumnovelle similarly highlight, by means of overtly 'Freudian' overtones, the unconscious desires that threaten the apparent harmony of their relationship. It is only by recognising the

²³²The dream, Freud said, 'ist ein vollgültiges psychisches Phänomen, und zwar eine Wunscherfüllung; er ist einzureihen in den Zusammenhang der uns verständlichen seelischen Aktionen des Wachens' (Sigmund Freud, 'Der Traum ist eine Wunscherfüllung', from Die Traumdeutung, in Wunberg, Die Wiener Moderne, pp.158-159, (p.158). It should be noted that many of Schnitzler's works predate Freud's theory of dreams and other psychoanalytical theories. Although Schnitzler, as a doctor, kept abreast of Freud's scientific writings, on the whole he reached his own observations about the human unconscious independently.

existence and force of these secret wishes that both partners are able to confront the problems that face them from a realistic standpoint. Both realise that the secret world of the unconscious is as real and as meaningful as the conscious, waking world itself. The relationship between dream and reality is seen clearly in other stories, in Amerika, for example, where the narrator vacillates between reality and nostalgic reverie, in Blumen, where the narrator's perception of the world 'bekommt den Charakter eines unklaren Traumes' (E I, p.225), in Das neue Lied, where, again, we are told Karl, 'war es zumut wie in einem Traum' (E I, p.633) at the sight of Marie's dead body. It is a fine dividing line between dream and reality, a source of bewilderment to characters, like Fridolin and Albertine, for whom dream and reality appear to have equal validity. Confusion between the two states of consciousness undermines the emotional stability of the characters, as it does Emma's in Die Toten schweigen. Physically and mentally exhausted, Emma's inability to distinguish between dream and reality serves only to exacerbate her mental turmoil:

"Was hast du?" sagt der Professor sehr ernst,
indem er aufsteht.
"Was... wie?... Was ist?"
"Ja, was ist dir denn?"
"Nichts." Sie drückte den Jungen fester an sich.
Der Professor sieht sie lang an.
"Weißt du, daß du begonnen hast, einzuschlummern
und -"
"Und?"
"Dann hast du plötzlich aufgeschrien."
"...So?"
"Wie man im Traum schreit, wenn man Alpdrücken
hat. Hast du geträumt?"
"Ich weiß nicht. Ich weiß gar nichts."
(E I, p.310-11)

Interestingly, Varka experiences a similar turmoil in Chekhov's Спать хочется, as she too finds herself unable to distinguish between waking and sleeping, life and death. In murdering the baby in order to gain a few

hours sleep, she equates death with physical relief.²³³

Dreams in Schnitzler often reflect specific psychological problems and insecurities. In Chekhov, they more often express a character's sense of dissatisfaction with life. As far as we know, Chekhov had no knowledge of Freud's theory of dreams, and made little conscious use of Freudian symbolism in his literature.²³⁴ In addition, Chekhov tends to use dreams in a much broader sense than Schnitzler. Whereas the dreams of Schnitzler's characters are almost always those experienced during the physiological process of sleeping, in Chekhov they also tend to incorporate his characters' ideals and aspirations. They frequently offer his characters a glimpse of the happiness they are unable to attain in real life. In На подводе, for example, the 'счастье, какого никогда не было' (IX, p.342), which Mar'ia glimpses in a moment of reverie, only provides temporary comfort and compounds her sense of isolation when she comes back to the present. In Бабье царство, Anna, like Mar'ia, dreams about love and happiness, but at the same time knows 'что ей уже поздно мечтать о счастье, что...выдумать какую-нибудь новую, особенную жизнь уже невозможно' (VIII, p.296). In Архиерей the bishop idealises the 'навски ушедшее, невозвратное время', imagining it to be 'светлее, праздничнее и богаче, чем было на самом деле' (X, p.188). For each of the

²³³See also Charanne C. Clarke, 'Aspects of Impressionism in Chekhov's Prose', in Chekhov's Art of Writing: A Collection of Critical Essays, edited by Paul Debreczeny and Thomas Eekman (Columbus, Ohio, 1977), pp.123-33. The author examines the role played by imagery in the confusion of dream and reality in the story (pp.126-27).

²³⁴In a letter to Grigorovich of the 12 February 1887, in which he discusses the latter's Сон Карелина, Chekhov expresses his views on dreams. He believed that dreams were highly subjective, but did not think they conformed to any universal theory of interpretation: 'Сон', Chekhov writes, '- явление субъективное и внутреннюю сторону эго можно наблюдать только на самом себе' (II, p.28).

characters the past, as recalled in their dreams, defies recapture. Any happiness to be found there inevitably proves to be illusory. Dreams about the past provide temporary relief from an often soul-destroying present but ultimately serve only to highlight the deficiencies of everyday life. Lyzhin's dream in По делам службы mentioned above, is slightly different from the majority of those found in Chekhov's work in that it provides Lyzhin with food for thought about the idea of a common purpose in life. Instead of providing him with a glimpse of some elusive happiness, his dream enables Lyzhin to clarify his philosophical position and to understand that for him who sees himself as part of the common whole, nothing in life is arbitrary, that there is a purpose and a plan behind everything (X, p.99). Nevertheless, the function fulfilled here by Lyzhin's dream in no way conflicts with the wider function of dreams in Chekhov and Schnitzler, which is primarily to provide a window into the soul of the characters, revealing further aspects of their innermost being.

The opposition between dream and reality is just one manifestation of the opposition of truth and illusion which runs throughout the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler. It creates a sense of indefiniteness which is intrinsic to Impressionistic art, and to an artistic approach which, in Bahr's words, 'alle Grenzen verwischt und alles nur in ein tanzendes Flirren und Flimmern auflöst' (Bahr, Impressionismus, in Wunberg, Die Wiener Moderne, p.258). Illusions and appearances are common elements in a world in which nothing is certain. In Chekhov, the reality of experience all too frequently falls short of his characters' aspirations and ideals, their goals of marital bliss, as we see them depicted in such stories as Учитель словесности and Три года, useful employment in Моя жизнь and Новая дача, domestic happiness in Крыжовник and В родном углу, rarely amounting to more than a

fruitless pipedream. Their experience of thwarted ideals leads to a gradual realisation of the illusory nature of their dreams and aspirations, by which time it is in most cases too late to take corrective action. Thus Startsev in Ионыч succumbs to a life of self-satisfied complacency, thus Shamokhin in Ариадна endures a far from idyllic existence with the woman of his earlier dreams, and thus Ivan Ivanych's brother in Крыжовник merely pretends to have achieved his life-long ambition. In turn, this realisation leads to an all-pervasive undercurrent of melancholy and regret. Having for so long nurtured grand illusions, they have now to come to terms with the reality of unfulfilled ideals.

If the distinction between reality and illusion is obscure in Chekhov, it is even more so in Schnitzler, where all notions of absolute truth are eschewed and characters live in a world dominated, like the Ringstrasse of late nineteenth century Vienna with its pseudo-grandiose architecture, by appearance, make-believe, and artefact. Schnitzler's world is a world of few certainties, where truth is relative and constantly changing, and is predicated entirely on the subjective perceptions of each individual. Problems of perception are compounded by the fact that his characters operate in a complex environment where reality and illusion are constantly intertwined.²³⁵ The manifestations of illusion are also numerous and varied. Play-acting is one of the most prominent. Thus in Komödiantinnen and Die kleine Komödie, (where emphasis on the notion of 'Spiel' is implicit in the titles themselves), the protagonists take on roles which are deliberately designed to distort

²³⁵With reference to Schnitzler's work, Evlakhov argues that 'Ложь и правда теряют свое прежнее значение: истинная правда - в нас самих, в нашей душе, и для каждого она своя, являясь ложью для других' (А.М.Евлakhов, Артур Шницлер (Баку, 1926)).

reality and deceive others. In Andreas Thameyers letzter Brief and Frau Berta Garlan, for example, the protagonists indulge in deliberate self-deception, distorting truth to preserve peace of mind. In numerous other stories, in Die Frau des Weisen, Der Andere, Der Witwer, Die Toten schweigen, they resort to adultery and infidelity, consciously deceiving their own and their partners' spouses. Elsewhere, in Mein Freund Ypsilon, for example, Reichtum, Flucht in die Finsternis, mental illness leads to a distortion of reality, while deception is practised on a much broader scale in the hypocrisy and double-standards of society that we see depicted in such stories as Leutnant Gustl and Fräulein Else. The emphasis which Schnitzler, much more than Chekhov, places on the notion of illusion by means of these different manifestations of it creates a backcloth of deep cynicism which is both characteristic of much of Schnitzler's literary output and symptomatic of the pervading influence of a society notorious for its preoccupation with superficiality and appearances. It also reinforces what Schnitzler sees as the essential uncertainty of life in general, and the fallibility of the individual.

Just as reality is reflected in the subjective perceptions of the individual, so too does the device of reminiscence reflect physical events in terms of subjective psychological responses, thus relating the external physical world to the internal, psychological world of the character.²³⁶ The reminiscing figure in many of the stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler is the first-person narrator. Stories like Дом с мезонином.

²³⁶In her analysis of Schnitzler's impressionistic narrative, Driver mentions the flashback and the notion of time in general as one of the many elements of Schnitzler's art which she finds integral to his impressionistic technique.

Красавицы,²³⁷ Ариадна, Огни, Mein Freund Ypsilon, Die Weissagung, Das Tagebuch der Redegonda, consist in each case of the narrator's recollection of certain past events. The degree to which his memories provide insights into his character varies from story to story, however. In some, in Ариадна, for example, or Die Weissagung, although some insight into the character of the narrators is provided by their memories, these function primarily as the source of material for an interesting and entertaining plot, and as a vehicle for the discussion of particular propositions. Thus Shamokhin in the former story uses his own experiences to look at the concept of love and the power of the predatory female, and thus Umrecht in the latter uses his to examine the role of fate in the life of human beings. It is the other way round in stories like Скучная история and Blumen, where the narrator's memories function as the essential ingredients of a character study, revealing by reference to the protagonists' preoccupations and concerns aspects of their psychological condition.

Reminiscence is not confined exclusively to the first person narrators, however. It is a means of psychological revelation that extends also to third person heroes and heroines. In На подводе, the narrator tells us about Mar'ia by contrasting the happiness of her recollections of the past with the disillusion she feels in her present life. In Das neue Lied, Karl's memories of his former relationship with Marie Ladenbauer provide insight into the mind of a man tormented by guilt and tortured by a sense of regret for what might have been. Memories enable their characters to inhabit, albeit temporarily, a more appealing world than the one they are presently in. The division between past and present is

²³⁷It is significant in this respect that the first of the two stories contained in Красавицы begins with the word 'помню...'. .

temporarily broken down,²³⁸ as the reminiscing figure is provided with an opportunity to relive the past. Brief excursions into bygone, relatively happy times, provide a temporary comfort, but in turn reinforce the essential irretrievability of the past. Once the present is restored, melancholy and regret reassert themselves. The interplay between past and present, between happiness and regret, often accounts for the extremes of mood that characters like Mar'ia in На подводе and the bishop in Архиепeй experience. In Schnitzler's Amerika, the mood alternates between one of excitement as the protagonist arrives in America for the first time and one of nostalgia as he remembers the lover he has left behind in Europe. This alternation is a further manifestation of the 'impermanence', indefiniteness and fluidity that we see in much of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's work.

6.1.3 Vocabulary

The constant interplay between oppositions such as reality and dream, truth and illusion, past and present, which are to be found in the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler, creates an indeterminate and indefinite world, in Mach's words, an 'ewige Bewegung, chamäleonartig schillernd'²³⁹. Both writers consistently employ additional linguistic features to underline this notion of fluidity and impermanence. The recurrent use of phrases stressing suggestion and possibility, for

²³⁸Baumann draws attention to the interrelationship between past and present in Schnitzler. Schnitzler's characters, says Baumann, 'gehen... nie in ihren gegenwärtigen Situationen auf, das Vergangene umwittert sie, das Fluidum des Halbbewußten, der Dunstkreis aus Erinnerungen. Sie haften an dem Augenblick, der zwischen Erinnern und Vergessen liegt, zwischen Hier und Anderswo, ohne sich für etwas zu entscheiden' (Baumann, p.12).

²³⁹Bertha Zuckerkandl, 'Hermann Bahr, Ernst Mach und Emil Zuckerkandl im Gespräch: Wien 1908', in Wunberg, Die Wiener Moderne, pp.171-77 (p.171).

example, undermine the concept of objective certainty by highlighting the uncertainty and changeability of the individual's subjective perceptions. In Chekhov's prose, the frequent occurrence of such words and phrases expressing ignorance and conjecture as 'когда-нибудь', 'что-то', 'почему-то', 'по-видимому', 'быть может', reminds us that the individual's view of the world is both subjective and fallible. The abundance of such phrases in the following passage from Володя большой и Володя маленький enables the reader to observe outside events from the point of view of the heroine, and to gain some idea of the uncertainty which colours her perceptions of the world:

В церкви служба еще не начиналась. [...] Почему-то в одной из монашенок, небольшого роста, с худенькими плечами и с черною косынкой на голове она узнала Олю, хотя Оля, когда уходила в монастырь, была полная и как будто повыше. Нерешительно, сильно волнуясь отчего-то, Софья Львовна подошла к послушнице и через плечо поглядела ей в лицо, и узнала Олю. -Оля!- сказала она и всплеснула руками, и уж не могла говорить от волнения. -Оля! Монашенка тотчас же узнала ее, удивленно подняла брови, и ее бледное, недавно умытое, чистое лицо и даже, как показалось, ее белый платочек, который виден был из-под косынки, просияли от радости. (VIII, pp.218-19) (My emphasis)

Exact equivalents of such phrases are generally less common in Schnitzler's prose, although Schnitzler achieves much the same effect by employing a large vocabulary of impressionistic nouns, verbs, and adjectives which seek to capture the imprecision and fluidity of subjective fleeting impressions. It is a vast vocabulary, comprising such deliberately 'contourless' words as 'Dunst', 'Nebel', 'Traum', 'Glut', 'schimmern', 'zittern', 'schwimmen', 'glänzen', 'schwanken', 'grau', 'blaß', 'verschwommen', 'unruhig' and many others. The incidence of these and similar words in Schnitzler's prose is conspicuously high. Take, for instance, the opening paragraph of Amerika:

Der graue Herbstmorgen überschattet Meer und Land; noch schwankt alles unter mir; noch immer fühle ich den unruhigen Gang der Wogen...Aus dem Nebel erhebt sich die Stadt. (E I, p.15) (My emphasis)

An abundance of Impressionistic words in a similar passage at the end of Das neue Lied creates an effect reminiscent of a fading dream, thus enabling the reader access into Karl's own perception of events:

Karl öffnete die Augen, wie um einen bösen Traum zu verscheuchen. [...] der Spazierstock Jedeks zeichnete sich wie eine feine Linie am Horizont ab; immer rascher gingen sie, [Jedek und Rebay], von einer leichten Staubwolke begleitet, aber ihre Worte verklangen im Wind. Rings herum glänzte die Landschaft, und tief unten in der Glut des Mittags schwamm und zitterte die Stadt. (E I, p.634) (My emphasis)

Chekhov too adopts a similar vocabulary, particularly in those stories most resembling psychological case-studies. The opening paragraph of Архиерей provides one such illustration:

Под вербное воскресенье в Старо-Петровском монастыре шла всеношная. Когда стали раздавать вербы, то был уже десятый час на исходе, огни потускнели, фитили нагорели, было все, как в тумане. В церковных сумерках толпа колыхалась, как море, и преосвященному Петру, который был нездоров уже дня три, казалось, что все лица - и старые, и молодые, и мужские, и женские - походили одно на другое, у всех, кто подходил за вербой, одинаковое выражение глаз. В тумане не было видно дверей, толпа все двигалась, и похоже было, что ей нет и не будет конца. Пел женский хор, канон читала монашенка. (X, p.186)

Both men depict the apparent spontaneity of subjective experience by means of carefully chosen words and phrases. The apparent vagueness of their characters' perceptions is the result of painstaking effort and thought. Schnitzler goes still further than Chekhov in his bid to reproduce the workings of a character's mind by developing techniques of punctuation for this purpose. Characteristic of Schnitzler's orthography is an

abundance of dots and dashes which he uses as a means of signalling the interruptions and sudden directional changes inherent in the normal thinking process. We see this in the following passage from Ein Abschied where the deliberately frequent use of such punctuation marks creates a staccato effect which underlines Albert's restless state of mind:

Er erinnerte sich des letzten Zusammenseins mit ihr... nein, nein, sie hatte nie aufgehört, ihn zu lieben - nein, das gewiß nicht! - Oder sollte man bei ihr zu Hause einen Verdacht gefaßt haben?... Nein, das war ja nicht möglich... es war bisher auch nicht eine Spur davon aufgetaucht - und sie war ja so vorsichtig.- Es konnte also nur einen Grund geben: sie war leidend und lag zu Bette. Und deswegen konnte sie auch keine Nachricht an ihn gelangen lassen... Und morgen würde sie aufstehen und vor allem anderen ein paar Zeilen an ihn senden, ihn zu beruhigen... Ja, wenn sie aber erst in zwei Tagen oder noch später das Bett verlassen könnte... wenn sie ernstlich krank... um Himmels willen... wenn sie schwer krank wäre... Nein, nein, nein...warum denn gleich schwer krank!... (E I, p.243)

One of the most striking examples of Schnitzler's more unconventional use of punctuation of this kind comes at the end of Fräulein Else. The repeated use of a series of three dots signalling interruptions in Else's mental process forms part of an attempt by Schnitzler to capture the death experience as it is actually happening:

Else! Else!

Sie rufen so weit! Was wollt Ihr denn? Nicht wecken. Ich schlafe ja so gut. Morgen früh. Ich träume und fliege. Ich fliege... fliege... fliege... schlafe und träume... und fliege... nicht wecken... morgen früh...

El...

Ich fliege... ich träume... ich schlafe... ich

träu... träu - ich flie..... (E II, p.381)²⁴⁰

The kind of innovations that we see in Schnitzler's use of punctuation reflects something of Altenberg's influence on Schnitzler. A system of punctuation which sought to reflect the spontaneity of the individual's mental processes was one of several features, including reference to sensory phenomena and an aphoristic approach, which characterised Altenberg's impressionist word-sketches. Of all the Jung Wien writers, Altenberg is the one who represents literary Impressionism most fully. The importance Schnitzler attached to a method of punctuation which assisted the revelation of a character's psychology can be seen throughout his prose. In direct speech, for instance, Schnitzler will often make a distinction between those occasions when a character is speaking to other people, and those when he is speaking or thinking to himself. In the latter case, speech marks are often omitted. By contrast, Chekhov's use of punctuation is altogether more conventional, although he too makes limited use of some of the techniques employed more frequently and originally by Schnitzler.²⁴¹

Also characteristic of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's impressionistic approach to literature is the predominance of sensory details, especially colours,

²⁴⁰Booth quotes the same passage to exemplify the failure of the stream-of-consciousness technique to portray this process. 'Physical immediacy' he writes, 'is a weapon that can easily destroy a work if used indiscriminately' (Booth, p.60). He argues for control 'in the use of vivid psychic intimacy'; it is this which, in his view, is lacking at the end of Schnitzler's story: 'Does anything seem more flaccid now than the "intensities" of some of those early experiments in stream-of-consciousness?' (p.61).

²⁴¹Miles and Pitcher, for instance, observe that these 'points de suspension' are a common feature of Chekhov's prose, particularly of his early stories (Anton Chekhov, The Early Stories: 1883-88, translated and edited by Patrick Miles and Harvey Pitcher (London, 1984), p.8).

sounds and smells. These play an important part in the recreation of their characters' subjective impressions, and give credence to Mach's assertion that all experience 'sich auflöst in allem, was fühlbar, hörbar, sichtbar, tastbar ist' (Zuckerkindl, p.171). Ours is an insubstantial world, Mach continues, 'die nur aus Farben, Konturen, Thönen besteht'. The abundance of references to sensory phenomena which we find in the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler seems to lend support to Mach's view, influential in its time, that reality may essentially be reduced to the subjective impressions of the individual. Whether or not Chekhov and Schnitzler would have agreed with Mach in full, sensory details in their literature play an important part in the evocation of atmosphere and in the portrayal of psychological states. In Убийство, for example, the ominous noises coming from the attic (IX, p.137), evoke in the reader a sense of foreboding prophetic of the story's violent climax. In Человек в футляре, the sound of Mavra's footsteps reinforces the monotony of Ivan Ivanovich's disillusioned existence (X, p.54). His peace of mind is undermined by nagging worries and regrets; the tapping of Mavra's feet seems to echo his anxieties. In Невеста, the sound of the wind accentuates Nadia's desperate state of mind:

Ветер стучал в окна, в крышу; слышался свист, и в печи домовой жалобно и угрюмо напевал свою песенку. Был первый час ночи. В доме все уже легли, но никто не спал, и Наде все чуялось, что внизу играют на скрипке. Послышался резкий стук, должно быть, сорвалась ставня. [...] В печке раздалось пение нескольких басов и даже послышалось: А-ах, бо-о-же мой! Надя села в постели и вдруг схватила себя крепко за волосы и зарыдала. (X, p.212)

Sounds in Schnitzler's work have similar, often overtly symbolic associations. In Sterben, Marie's innate 'joie de vivre' is symbolised by the carnival music she and Felix hear while walking in Salzburg. By contrast, the irritation which the same sounds cause Felix underlines

his own morbidity and accentuates the gulf between him and Marie. In Fräulein Else, the climax of the story takes place in a room of the hotel where a pianist is playing Schumann's Karneval. The importance Schnitzler attaches to this auditory detail as a means of penetrating Else's confused mind is illustrated by the fact that he even quotes an extract from the score. Sensory details occur most frequently, however, not in isolation, but in conjunction with each other. In Архиерей, Chekhov describes the bishop's return home against a collage of sounds and colours:

И почему-то слезы потекли у него по лицу. На душе было покойно, все было благополучно, но он неподвижно глядел на левый клирос, где читали, где в вечерней мгле уже нельзя было узнать ни одного человека, и - плакал. [...] Когда архиерей садился в карету, чтобы ехать домой, то по всему саду, освещенному луной, разливался веселый, красивый звон дорогих, тяжелых колоколов. Белые стены, белые кресты на могилах, белые березы и черные тени и далекая луна на небе, стоявшая как раз над монастырем, казалось, теперь жили своей особой жизнью, непонятной, но близкой человеку. Был апрель в начале, и после теплого весеннего дня стало прохладно, слегка подморозило, и в мягком холодном воздухе чувствовалось дыхание весны. [...] Потом пошли широкие, темные улицы, одна за другою, безлюдные, земское шоссе за городом, поле, запахло сосной. И вдруг выросла перед глазами белая зубчатая стена, а за нею высокая колокольня, вся залитая светом, и рядом с ней пять больших, золотых, блестящих глав,- [...]. И тут также высоко над монастырем тихая, задумчивая луна. Карета въехала в ворота, скрипя по песку, кое-где в лунном свете замелькали черные монашеские фигуры, слышались шаги по каменным плитам... (X, pp.186-87)

Schnitzler employs a similar range of sensory details in a passage from Die Toten schweigen:

Sie spazierten vorwärts. So lang die Brücke allmählich anstieg, sprachen sie nichts; und als sie beide das Wasser unter sich rauschen hörten, blieben sie eine Weile stehen. Tiefes Dunkel war um sie. Der breite Strom dehnte sich grau und in unbestimmten Grenzen hin, in der Ferne sahen sie rote Lichter, die über dem Wasser zu schweben schienen und sich darin spiegelten. Von dem Ufer

her, das die beiden eben verlassen hatten, senkten sich zitternde Lichtstreifen ins Wasser; jenseits war es, als verlöre sich der Strom in die schwarzen Auen. Jetzt schien ein ferneres Donnern zu ertönen, das immer näher kam; unwillkürlich sahen sie beide nach der Stelle, wo die roten Lichter schimmerten; Bahnzüge mit hellen Fenstern rollten zwischen eisernen Bogen hin, die plötzlich aus der Nacht hervorzuwachsen und gleich wieder zu versinken schienen. Der Donner verlor sich allmählich, es wurde still; nur der Wind kam in plötzlichen Stößen. (E I, pp.299-300)

In each passage, sensory details evoke a mood which illuminates the characters' states of mind. Such moods, evoked by apparently random reference to colours and sounds, often give rise to unexpected effects, as in the passage from Дамa с собачкой where the 'утренний туман', the 'белые облака' high above the hills, the sound of chirping crickets, the 'однообразный, глухой шум моря', speaking 'о вечном сне' (X, p.133), have the combined effect of moving Gurov to uncharacteristic thoughts about beauty and the future of mankind. Elsewhere, sensory details evoke associations with the past, creating, as for example in Amerika, На подводке, Das neue Lied, Die Nächste, Студент, a mood of nostalgic reverie in which the protagonists look back at the past with longing and regret. Sensory details, especially sounds and colours, thus play a crucial role in Chekhov's and Schnitzler's impressionistic approach to literary creation. They form part of the process of atmospheric evocation and psychological portrayal.

6.1.4 Nature

As part of that same approach in the fiction of Chekhov and Schnitzler, the natural world also has an important role to play, although compared to Chekhov, the urban location of many of Schnitzler's stories necessarily reduces the incidence of descriptions of nature in his works. Of the two, Chekhov is clearly more

comfortable in the natural world, depicting nature with the skill and understanding of an expert. Characteristic of Chekhov's natural descriptions is a close affinity with the techniques of nineteenth century Impressionist painting. Adopting a 'brush-stroke' method which results in a 'canvas' composed of seemingly random details, he portrays nature in a way that is more suggestive than explicit. Merely hinting at the complete picture, Chekhov leaves the task of completion to the reader. The overall effect of his natural descriptions, however, is usually to create a mood that throws light on the character and state of mind of the protagonists. Nowhere in Chekhov's stories does nature play quite as dominant a role as in Степь, consisting of a series of landscapes and other natural descriptions, functioning not only as a means of atmospheric evocation, but also as a source of pictorial embellishment. The presence of the travellers, whose journey through the steppes in mid Summer provides what little plot there is, is depicted almost as an intrusion into the all-powerful world of nature. And yet, a close relationship obtains between the natural and the human world,²⁴² as we see, for example, in Chekhov's description of the effect that the atmosphere at nightfall has on the mood of the travellers:

И в следующую затем ночь подводчики делали привал и варили кашу. На этот раз с самого начала во всем чувствовалась какая-то неопределенная тоска. Было душно; все много пили и никак не могли утолить жажду. Луна взошла сильно багровая и хмурая, точно больная; звезды тоже хмурились, мгла была гуще, даль мутнее. Природа как будто что-то предчувствовала и томилась.

У костра уж не было вчерашнего оживления и разговоров. Все скучали и говорили вяло и нехотя. Пантелей только вздыхал, жаловался на ноги и то и

²⁴²Kramer also observes a correlation between nature, particularly the seasons, and both the characters' moods and the motivation of their actions. See Karl D.Kramer, 'Chekhov and the Seasons', in Debreczeny and Eekman (eds.), pp.68-81.

дело заводил речь о наглой смерти. (VII, p.81)

In other passages, the link between the natural and the psychological worlds is underlined by the description of natural phenomena in human terms. Just as Chekhov creates an anthropomorphic animal world, so too does he invest the natural world with features exclusively associated with human experience:²⁴³

А вот, встревоженный вихрем и не понимая, в чем дело, из травы вылетел коростель. Он летел за ветром, а не против, как все птицы; от этого его перья взъерошились, весь он раздулся до величины курицы и имел очень сердитый, внушительный вид. Одни только грачи, состарившиеся в степи и привыкшие к степным переполохам, покойно носились над травой или же равнодушно, ни на что не обращая внимания, долбили своими толстыми клювами черствую землю.

За холмами глухо прогремел гром; подуло свежестью. [...]

Еще бы, кажется, небольшое усилие, одна потуга, и степь взяла бы верх. Но невидимая гнетущая сила мало-помалу сковала ветер и воздух, уложила пыль, и опять, как будто ничего не было, наступила тишина. Облако спряталось, загорелые холмы нахмурились, воздух покорно застыл и одни только встревоженные чибисы где-то плакали и жаловались на судьбу...

Затем скоро наступил вечер. (VII, pp.29-30)

Chekhov is keen to point out, however, that the natural world has absolute autonomy, is often remote from and untouched by the fate of humankind, sometimes even to the point of disdain. In Гусев, for instance, the 'ласковые, радостные, страстные' colours of a tropical seascape seem to mock Gusev's unceremonious, humiliating fate as his body is devoured by a shark (VII, p.339). Common to all Chekhov's natural descriptions, however, is a level of

²⁴³We see other evidence of this in Красавицы, for example, where the narrator describes the clouds as a monk, a fish, and a turk in a turban (VII, p.160). Here Chekhov employs the device primarily for poetic effect. In Ионыч too, we are told, 'в глубоком смирении с неба смотрели звезды' (X, p.31). Such devices further reflect Chekhov's eclectic approach to narrative writing.

lyricism which raises his prose as a whole to a higher artistic plain.

Schnitzler's natural descriptions are generally more limited in variety and number, and are included less for simple 'embellishment' than for a specific, often symbolic purpose. The urban setting of the majority of Schnitzler's works determines the relatively low profile that nature has in them. As a result, however, those references to the natural world which we do find are often invested with special significance and import. In many cases they provide a kind of commentary on the emotional state of the characters. Many of Schnitzler's references to nature take the form of meteorological descriptions, with changes in the psychological state of his characters paralleled by corresponding changes in the weather.²⁴⁴ In the following passage from Sterben, for example, the references to the worsening weather conditions lend resonance to the deteriorating state of Marie's relationship with Felix:

Ein unangenehmer Wind hatte sich erhoben, und nun begann von dem grauen Himmel ein feiner Regen herunterzurieseln, der eine Luft von tückischer Feuchtigkeit in die Stube brachte. Die hatte mit einem Male alle Traulichkeit der Sommernacht verloren, war grau und fremd. Ein trostloser Herbstmorgen war mit einem Male da, der allen Zauber weghohnte, den sie da hereingeträumt hatten. [...]

Sie ließ sich nicht beruhigen. "Ich bitte dich, Felix, fahren wir zurück, fahren wir nach Wien."

"Aber -"

"Es ist nun sowieso mit dem Sommer aus. Schau nur da hinaus, wie öd, wie trostlos! Es ist auch gefährlich, wenn es nun kalt wird." (E I, p.136)

²⁴⁴For a discussion of symbolism in Doktor Gräsler and other stories, see Ernest von Nardroff, 'Aspects of Symbolism in the Works of Arthur Schnitzler' (PhD thesis, Columbia University, 1966). Also his 'Doktor Gräsler, Badearzt: Weather as an Aspect of Schnitzler's Symbolism', Germanic Review, 43/ii(1968), 109-20. Driver maintains that 'the impressionistic usage of weather and scenery are common' to both Chekhov and Schnitzler (Driver, p.60).

A comparable passage in Chekhov's Попрыгунья links dismal weather conditions with Riabovskii's gloomy state of mind. The tone is deliberately ironic, however, in keeping with Riabovskii's overdramatised manner:

Рано утром на Волге бродил легкий туман, а после девяти часов стал накрапывать дождь. И не было никакой надежды, что небо прояснится. [...] А Волга уже была без блеска, тусклая, матовая, холодная на вид. Все, все напоминало о приближении тоскливой, хмурой осени. И казалось, что роскошные зеленые ковры на берегах, алмазные отражения лучей, прозрачную синюю даль и все шегольское и парадное природа сняла теперь с Волги и уложила в сундуки до будущей весны, и вороны летали около Волги и дразнили ее: Голая! голая! Рябовский слушал их карканье и думал о том, что он уже выдохся и потерял талант, что все на этом свете условно, относительно и глупо и что не следовало бы связывать себя с этой женщиной... Одним словом, он был не в духе и хандрил. (VIII, p.17)

In Der blinde Geronimo und sein Bruder, climatic fluctuations illuminate the protagonists' psychological development. References to the 'naßkalten Wind' at the beginning of the story (E I, P.367) reflect the 'cooling off' of Carlo's relations with his brother Geronimo. As their relationship deteriorates further, the weather, we are told, 'wurde immer schlechter, ein kalter Regen klatschte herab. Nach einer Reihe schöner Tage schien der Herbst plötzlich und allzufrüh hereinzubrechen' (ibid). Fog ensues, underlining the apparent hopelessness of Carlo's situation. There is a deliberate contrast between the prevailing darkness, paralleling that sense of hopelessness and gloom, and the 'warme Sommertage' and 'weiße Landstraßen (E I, p.377) which reflect the warmth of Carlo's former relationship with his brother. Finally the fog disperses completely, giving way to images of sunlight, and by extension, of happiness, ('der Glanz der Sonne', 'das große weiße Hotel wie in Morgenglanz gebadet', 'Gäste in lichten Sommergewänden' (E I, p.386)), echoing Carlo's elation at his reconciliation with Geronimo and his deep sense of

relief. This progression is reversed in Chekhov's В родном углу; as Vera returns home full of optimism for the future, the countryside is described positively: 'Степь, степь... Лошади бегут, солнце все выше...; травы в цвету - зеленые, желтые, лиловые, белые' (IX, pp.313-14). When Vera herself becomes disillusioned with life, nature loses its initial appeal: 'громадные пространства, длинные зимы, однообразие и скука' (IX, p.322). The emphasis on natural descriptions is clearly more marked in Chekhov's work than in Schnitzler's, but their function is often similar.

6.2 Naturalistic Features

6.2.1 Attention to Detail

In the psychologically orientated literature of Chekhov and Schnitzler, we see evidence of what Marie Herzfeld refers to as 'die Anwendung der Methode des Naturalismus auf seelische Probleme und die Überführung der Methode exakter Wissenschaft auf eine spiritualistische Weltbetrachtung'.²⁴⁵ This marriage between the 'scientific' and the 'spiritual' is specifically elucidated in terms of the union between medicine and art which Chekhov and Schnitzler embodied in their working lives. The adaptation of the methods of Naturalism is perhaps most apparent in Chekhov's and Schnitzler's attention to psychological and physical detail.²⁴⁶ In both men's work, however, we find certain modifications to standard Naturalistic methods. One such

²⁴⁵Marie Herzfeld, 'Fin-de-Siècle', in Wunberg, Die Wiener Moderne, pp.260-66, (pp.264-65).

²⁴⁶One of the clearest examples of this is Schnitzler's use of the stream-of-consciousness technique, discussed above. By aiming to reproduce exactly the workings of the individual's mind with scientific precision, it represents one of the most naturalistic and scientific of all literary techniques.

modification is the selective rather than the indiscriminate use of details which mainstream Naturalists, intent on absolute authenticity, tended to favour. By selecting details which rely for their full impact on implication, suggestion and intimation, Chekhov and Schnitzler not only adopt a highly laconic narrative style, but also emphasise the importance of reader participation.²⁴⁷ Details in both men's work are carefully chosen, often for their suggestive properties and

²⁴⁷The notion of reader participation is taken up by the literary theorist Roman Ingarden (among others). Any literary work, he writes, is a 'schematised structure' consisting of an infinite number of 'spots of indeterminacy' which the reader is called upon to make sense of. Ingarden calls this interaction between reader and text, this 'actualising' of indeterminacies, the process of 'concretisation' (cited in Robert C. Holub, Reception Theory (London, 1984), pp.24-25). It is a process that requires 'creativity,...skill, and perspicuity' and is effected by 'personal experiences, moods and a whole array of other contingencies' (Holub, p.26).

implications.²⁴⁸ In this, naturally, understatement and restraint play an important role.²⁴⁹ It is unusual for either Chekhov or Schnitzler, particularly for Chekhov, to give more than just a brief character sketch, or to convey more than just a part of the full picture. Both men believe in providing the reader with just enough information to enable him to deduce for himself the wider ramifications of a situation. We see this in Невеста, where the reference to a few specially selected details in Chekhov's description of Nadia's future home, the

²⁴⁸Durkin alludes to the suggestive properties of Chekhov's fiction when he argues that 'Chekhov intentionally "fails" to describe a situation fully so as to draw the attentive reader into more imaginative participation than would be the case if Chekhov were to state explicitly all implications' (Andrew R. Durkin, 'Chekhov's Narrative Technique', in Clyman (editor), pp.123-35 (pp.123-24)). Significantly, Derman sees Chekhov's laconicism as being 'dependent on the creative cooperation of the reader' who is encouraged to think for himself and 'extract the subtext from the text' (A. Derman, 'The Essence of Čexov's Creative Approach', in Hulanicki and Savignac (editors), 23-28 (p.27, p.24)). Elsewhere, Derman too stresses author-reader interaction: 'эта переоценка читателя была особенно важна для Чехова потому, что она отчасти санкционировала распределение им ролей между писателем и читателем: первому - создание текста, второму - подтекста' (Derman p.27). For Chekhov's laconic use of details as a means of psychological revelation, see also E.S. Dobin, 'The Nature of Detail', in Hulanicki etc., pp.39-59, and 'Das Detail als Kompositionskern bei Tschechow', Kunst und Literatur, 24(1974), 165-80, L.D. Usmanov, 'Принцип "сжатости" в поэтике позднего Чехова-беллетриста и русской реализма конца XIX века', in Поэтика и стилистика русской литературы (Leningrad, 1971), pp.246-53, Joseph L. Conrad, 'Anton Chekhov's Literary Landscapes', in Debreczeny etc., pp.82-99, and Bitsilli, chapter 3. By contrast, it should be noted that Chudakov and Durkin agree that in order to produce the effect of randomness inherent in the real world, Chekhov sometimes uses unnecessary details which stand 'beyond the notion that every petty observation can only be part of something larger' (Chudakov, p.130). In Durkin's words, 'Chekhov typically enhances the illusion of reality by including "accidental" or "unnecessary" information' (Durkin, p.125).

²⁴⁹On Schnitzler's use of understatement, Baumann comments, 'die Gestalten offenbaren sich durch das, was sie verschweigen, und Schnitzler ist ein Meister in dieser seltenen Weisheit. Man ahnt unablässig, daß er mehr weiß, als er aussprechen läßt, daß er über den Reichtum der Sparsamen verfügt' (Baumann, p.36). Baumann's remarks are equally applicable to Chekhov's prose.

Viennese-style chairs, the smell of fresh paint, the mediocre paintings, deliberately suggests something of the vulgarity that marriage, for Nadia, seems to entail. A character's psychological condition may also be hinted at through his actions. Involuntary movements, gestures, postures, often reveal information about a character that is disproportionate to the apparent significance of such details in the text, something close to the essence of understatement. In Komödiantinnen/Helene, for example, we are told that Helene 'spielte noch immer mit den Falten des Vorhangs, den sie zwischen den Händen hin und her gleiten ließ. Zuweilen schaute sie ihn mit einem klaren Blicke an, der nur langsam von ihm weg in die Ecke des Zimmers ging' (E I, pp.211-12). Later she rushes out of the house and into a side-alley; 'hier blieb sie eine Weile stehen und atmete tief auf. Dann aber eilte sie weiter, mit schnellen Schritten und mit immer schnelleren, als ob sie fliehen wollte' (p.215). Such actions seem incidental per se, but they imply a great deal about the despair of a woman who has seen her lover for the last time without having been able to confess her love. In Casanovas Heimfahrt, the heat, we are told, causes Casanova 'seinen Schritt allmählich zu mäßigen' (E II, p.233); he puts off changing out of his travelling attire in order to make a better impression on his hosts, particularly the young Marcoline, in the evening (p.241). Insignificant though such details appear to be, they highlight both the physical and psychological effects of ageing on Casanova, his growing insecurity, and his diminishing self-confidence. They also bear witness to Schnitzler's acute understanding of human psychology and behaviour. We see a similar laconic use of detail in Chekhov's prose too, where apparently redundant information is invested with great sub-textual import. In Бабу́е ца́рство, for example, Anna's munificence towards her employees clearly suggests an inability to communicate with those who were once her social equals.

Minor details, here and elsewhere, are carefully chosen by both Chekhov and Schnitzler to provide valuable insights into character.

Such details, at first sight innocuous and redundant, reverberate with hidden ironies whose full significance only emerges in the light of later developments. An important feature of both men's prose and one that is well suited to their elliptical approach, irony by definition depends for its effect on what is unsaid and on what is implied. An undercurrent of irony is present throughout their work providing additional layers of meaning and consequently extra depth and resonance. In Leutnant Gustl, for example, it is only after Gustl takes the decision to commit suicide that the irony of his earlier remark, 'Ja, übermorgen bin ich vielleicht eine tote Leiche!', (E I, p.337), becomes evident. What previously had been a casual comment is suddenly invested with all the seriousness of a death sentence. An apparently trivial remark about Robert in the first paragraph of Flucht in die Finsternis, that he 'gestern abend nun doch wieder vergessen hatte, die Tür zu versperren...' (E II, p.902), is charged with ironic and prophetic relevance when seen in the light of Robert's subsequent paranoia. In the same way, irony pervades Rashevich's entire conversation in В усадьбе, as he launches into a vicious attack on the working classes, unaware that his interlocutor, Meyer, is himself from the lower echelons of society. Thus Chekhov provides the reader with a deep insight into Rashevich's character without actually discussing him directly.

In terms of thematic content, Chekhov's stories are arguably more Naturalistic than Schnitzler's. By and large, Chekhov's stories depict common, everyday, inconspicuous situations where Schnitzler's, by contrast, single out the 'unusual' events of human experience. They are concerned with the 'Darstellung extremer

Situationen'²⁵⁰, and are thus generally more declamatory in character. Where Chekhov depicts the everyday occurrences in life as he saw them, Schnitzler turns to the more conspicuous events of human experience - murder, suicide, duels, madness. The fact that we see in Schnitzler's works a clear preoccupation, - some would say obsession, - with erotic themes as compared with Chekhov's reticence, is very much part of the contrast that underlies much of their literary work between the sensationalism of Schnitzler and the modesty of Chekhov. This larger-than-life quality of some of his stories calls for a bolder, more explicit style of writing than we find in Chekhov, resulting in a generally more restricted use of understatement and restraint.

Nevertheless, Chekhov happily dispenses with restraint where the context requires a forthright, naturalistic approach. We see this in В овраге, at the point where Aksinia pours boiling water over Lipa's baby. By depicting the scene in minute and shocking detail, he draws on methods akin to Zolaesque Naturalism.²⁵¹ The intended effect is one of stark horror. So too in Убийство where Chekhov describes the murder in stark detail leaving nothing to the imagination:

...а Алгае показалось, что это он [Матвей] хочет бить Якова, она вскрикнула, схватила бутылку с постным маслом и изо всей силы ударила ею ненавистного брата прямо по темени. Матвей

²⁵⁰Zinaida Vengerova, 'О Шницлере', Литературные характеристики, 3(1910), p.83, quoted in Heresch, Schnitzler in Rußland, p.294.

²⁵¹Rayfield comments that Chekhov's excursions into Zolaesque Naturalism were not always seen as totally successful: 'a number of Chekhov's stories', he remarks, '- notably A Woman's Kingdom and Three Years - employ a documentation, a naturalism, and a set of social attitudes that stem from Zola's work. Some argue that this accounts precisely for the weakness of these somewhat clumsy, limp, overlong stories' (Donald Rayfield, 'Chekhov and the literary Tradition', in Clyman (editor), pp.35-55, (p.47)).

пошатнулся, и лицо его в одно мгновение стало спокойным, равнодушным; Яков, тяжело дыша, возбужденный и испытывая удовольствие оттого, что бутылка, ударившись о голову, крякнула, как живая, не давал ему упасть и несколько раз (это он помнил очень хорошо) указал Алгае пальцем на утюг, и только когда полилась по его рукам кровь и послышался громкий плач Дашутки, и когда с шумом упала гладильная доска и на нее грузно повалился Матвей, Яков перестал чувствовать злобу и понял, что произошло.

[...] Все было страшно. Дашутка сидела на полу [...], всхлипывала и все кланялась, произнося с каждым поклоном: "гам! гам!" Но ничто не было так страшно для Якова, как вареный картофель в крови, но который он боялся наступить... (IX, pp.153-54)

Chekhov's highly vivid description is as explicit and naturalistic as anything we find in Schnitzler. Compare, for example, Schnitzler's graphic description of murder in Die Nächste:

Er [Gustav] zog sie [die Nadel] heraus, und indem er sie in die linke Faust nahm, stach er sie dem Weibe durchs Hemd in die Brust... Er hatte gut getroffen. Sie hob sich kramphaft in die Höhe, stieß einen Schrei aus, fuhr mit den Armen hin und her, packte die Nadel, hatte die Kraft nicht, sie aus der Wunde zu ziehen, und sank zurück. Gustav stand neben ihr, sah sie zucken, die Augen verdrehen, nochmals den Kopf heben, wieder zurücksinken... sterben... Dann erst zog er die Nadel aus der Wunde ... es war gar kein Blut daran. (E I, p.336)

Schnitzler aspires here to absolute candour, deliberately avoiding moderation and restraint to shock the reader with the full horror of one person's violence against another. Like the passage from Убийство above, it contrasts strongly with the laconic, understated prose of much of their other work, and serves to further underline both men's readiness to adopt a wide variety of styles and techniques.

6.2.2 Accents and Dialects

The use of accents and dialects common to Naturalist fiction is a device which we find both Chekhov and Schnitzler employing as an attempt at a naturalistic reproduction of speech. Their function is primarily one of characterisation, highlighting the social origins and status of the characters. The use of dialect is more typical in Schnitzler's plays than in his narrative works, (one thinks of certain characters in Freiwild, of Christine's father in Liebelei, of various doctors in Professor Bernhardt), due largely to the more immediate nature of the dramatic genre, a genre in which the written and spoken word are intrinsically related. In a number of his stories, however, Schnitzler reproduces certain aspects of spoken 'Wienerisch', partly to bring local colour into the work, but also to set characters and events in a specific geographical and social context. With information about a character's place of origin and social background, the reader is better placed to understand his psychology and general behaviour. By recognising the jargon of, say, Jedek and Rebay in Das neue Lied as that of the actor milieu of the Viennese 'music hall', we identify them not just with a particular lifestyle, but also with the attitudes inherited by a particular social group. Dialects and accents thus provide valuable information about the social and moral identity of the characters. The range of social groups which Schnitzler identifies in his stories by means of dialect is mainly limited to those associated with the entertainments industry, (Jedek and Rebay in Das neue Lied, Nachtigall in Traumnovelle), and people from the lower orders of society, (the coachman in Die Toten schweigen, the prostitute, again in Traumnovelle). Deviations from the standard German are approximate rather than exact, and more selective than all-encompassing. Certain modifications in the spellings and grammatical forms of words occur with greater

regularity than others; the 'ge-' of the past participle in standard German, for instance, is often transcribed in the orthography by the clipped 'g' of the Viennese dialect; unstressed 'e's are frequently omitted in accordance with the spoken dialect, the common Viennese diminutive '-l' is frequently appended. Other colloquial forms are also used: 'net' for 'nicht', 'sein' for 'sind', 'mein' for 'mir', as indeed are words and phrases peculiar to Austrian German: 'strabanzn', for example, (meaning 'müßig schlendern'), 'Servus!' (for 'Guten Tag'), 'desparat' (for 'verzweifelt'). A number of words of French origin also figure widely: 'Melange', 'Komfortabel', 'Variete', 'Fauteuil', as do Viennese placenames and landmarks like the Prater, the Augarten, the Karlskirche, the Stadtpark, the Café Imperial, often employed as a source of local colour. Elsewhere Austrian grammatical forms are preserved: 'auf die Reichstrassen' (accusative singular, not plural), 'neben die Herrn Offiziere' (accusative, not dative). Some of these features are incorporated into the following passage from Das Neue Lied:

"Nein," sagte Jedek verbindlich und verbeugte sich, "ich war so frei, Herr von Breiteneder - ich war so frei. Weil ich g'wußt hab', Sie sein da, hab' ich ihr g'sagt, daß Sie da sein. Und weil sie so oft nach Ihnen g'fragt hat, während sie krank war, hab' ich ihr g'sagt: >Der Herr Breiteneder is da... hinten bei der Latern' is er g'standen,< hab' ich ihr g'sagt, >und hat sich großartig unterhalten!<" (E I, p.630)

In Chekhov most deviations from standard Russian occur in his portrayal of servants, peasants and foreigners, although not all members of these social groups speak non-standard Russian. Like Schnitzler, Chekhov conveys the essentials of a particular dialect by employing selected 'ungrammatical' forms, colloquialisms, and slang words, using dialect as a means of social characterisation. In Мужики, for example, the jargon used

by the peasantry and partially reproduced in the text, enables the reader to identify more easily with the social, economic and moral environment of the characters. The unrefined language spoken by the peasants seems to underline their miserable quality of life. In Скрипка Ротшильда, Rotshil'd's Jewish accent identifies him as a member of a specific ethnic group, and allows Chekhov to focus on an environment in which entrenched anti-semitic prejudices prevail. Take, for example, the reaction Rotshil'd gets when he is sent to summon Jakov to play at a private function:

-Что ты лезешь ко мне, чеснок? - крикнул Яков.
-Не приставай!
Жид рассердился и тоже крикнул:
-Но ви пожалуста потише, а то ви у меня через забор полетите!
-Прочь с глаз долой!- заревел Яков и бродился на него с кулаками. -Житья нет от пархатых! (VIII, p.302)

In В ссылке, a Tartar's poor command of Russian betrays not only his ethnic background but also the system of values he upholds. In the following passage, the Tatar's linguistic idiosyncracies highlight those moral and conceptual idiosyncracies which make him different from his Russian interlocutors:

Жена, дочка ...Пускай каторга и пускай тоска, зато он видал и жену и дочку... Ты говоришь, ничего не надо. Но ничего - худо! Жена прожила с ним три года - это ему бог подарил. Ничего - худо, а три года - хорошо. Как не понимай? [...] - Он хорошо... хорошо, а ты - худо! Ты худо! Барин хорошая душа, отличный, а ты зверь, ты худо! Барин живой, а ты дохлый... Бог создал человека, чтоб живой был, чтоб и радость была, и тоска была, и горе было, а ты хочешь ничего, значит, ты не живой, а камень, глина! Камню надо ничего и тебе ничего... Ты камень - и бог тебя не любит, а барина любит! (VIII, p.46, pp.49-50)

It should be noted that the naturalistic depiction of dialect is only a feature of a minority of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories. It is, nevertheless, further evidence of their common eclectic approach to literature

that both men adopt what is in essence a naturalistic device for the purpose of characterisation.

Characters in Chekhov and Schnitzler do not necessarily have to speak with non-standard dialects for their language to yield important insights, however. The vocabulary of those standard Russian- and German-speaking characters, as it emerges from the many monologues and dialogues we find in their work, the catch-phrases they adopt, their manner of speech, can also be very revealing. In Архиерей, the bishop's mother is torn between speaking to the bishop on the one hand as she would to her own son, and on the other as she would to her social superior. Her anguish is reflected by the fact that she does not know whether to address him with the familiar 'ты' or the more formal 'вы'. Class distinctions are highlighted in Бабые царство in the discrepancy between the coarse language of Vera's servants and the erudite conversation (literature, the opera, philosophy), of her middle-class guests. In Попрыгунья Riabovskii speaks with affectation about the 'колдовской воды с фантастическим блеском', about the 'бездонного неба и грустных, задумчивых берегов, говорящих о суете нашей жизни и о существовании чего-то высшего, вечного, блаженного', about how wonderful it would be to 'забыться, умереть, стать воспоминанием' (VII, p.15). Such verbosity is a deliberate characterisation device which Chekhov here employs to highlight Riabovskii's innate superficiality.

In other stories, stock phrases, epithets, and lexical idiosyncracies, - Belikov's 'да как бы чего не вышло' in Человек в футляре (X, p.43), for example, Olga's nickname

'душечка' in the story of that name²⁵², Turkin's meaningless phrases like 'большинский, недружественно', 'покорчило вас благодарю' in Ионыч (X, p.28), - function as tools of characterisation, providing important clues to the attitudes, philosophies and concerns of those who utter them. The kind of characterisation devices mentioned here are more widespread in Chekhov's work than in Schnitzler's, - even in his later work, Chekhov retained some of the techniques of caricature which he regularly employed in his early literature. Nevertheless, we find that in Schnitzler's narrative the same function is often carried out by characters' spontaneous and unpremeditated remarks. In Sterben, for example, we glimpse something of Felix's innate maliciousness in such unpremeditated responses as on one occasion when Marie implores him to stop thinking about his impending death: '"Ooh, mein Fräulein"', he replies with a sarcasm that comes quite naturally to him, '"...ich soll sterben, und Sie sollen nicht einmal die kleine Unannehmlichkeit haben, mich davon reden zu hören?"' (E I, p.113). In Leutnant Gustl, some insight into Gustl's obnoxious character is provided by the discourteous way in which he addresses the cloakroom attendant as the arrogant young officer waits impatiently to collect his coat: '"Sie, zweihundertvierundzwanzig! Da hängt er! Na, hab'n Sie keine Augen? Da hängt er! Na, Gott sei Dank!... Also bitte!"' (E I, p.343). Unpremeditated as they are, they are clearly the words of an insolent and shallow-minded man, a view confirmed by

²⁵²This is just one example of a device which Chekhov uses extensively in his literary works. The significance which he attaches to his choice of names in his fiction is often comparable to that which Gogol gave to the names of his characters in such works as Мертвые души and Ревизор. The relative infrequency with which Schnitzler, by contrast, employs this device ensures that greater attention is paid to those few characters, discussed below, whose names are invested with symbolic resonance.

his offensive remark to the baker a few moments later: 'Sie, halten Sie das Maul!'" (p.343). Speed of delivery, tone of voice, the mood of an exchange, and other such features are also potential sources of character revelation. In Der Ehrentag, for example, it is the manner in which the heated exchange between Albertine and August takes place rather than the actual content of their exchange, that reflects Albertine's turbulent emotional state:

Sie eilte zum Wagenschlag und rief dem Kutscher etwas zu. August eilte ihr nach und packte sie beim Arm. "Wohin?"
"Was geht's dich an?" [...]
"In meinem Wagen werd' ich doch wohl mitfahren dürfen," stieß er zwischen den Zähnen hervor.
"Bitte."
Der Wagen rollte fort.
"Darf ich um Aufklärung bitten?" fragte August.
Sie antwortete nicht.
"Woher bist du gekommen?"
Sie schwieg.
"Warst du mit ihm?"
"Nein," sagte sie, "aber ich such' ihn."
"Was?"
"Ja."
"Bist du seine Geliebte?"
"Nein, aber verlaß dich drauf, heute werd' ich's noch." (E I, p.292)

In Die griechische Tänzerin, Mathilde's attempt to feign nonchalance in the face of rumours about her husband's infidelity is undermined by the way she continually stops and starts when telling her story (E I, p.574). In Княгиня the doctor begins by speaking in short monosyllabic sentences (VII, p.239). Failing to restrain his anger, however, he embarks on a long, heated tirade against the princess in which the manner of delivery provides the clearest clue to his highly volatile emotional state. Although we are told that the

доктор говорил быстро, горячо и некрасиво, с заиканьем и с излишней жестикуляцией; для нее было только понятно, что с нею говорит грубый, невоспитанный, злой, неблагодарный человек, но чего он хочет от нее и о чем говорит - она не понимала. (VII, pp.243-44)

there is nothing that cannot be gleaned from the doctor's utterances themselves. Soliloquy and conversation play an important role in both Chekhov's and Schnitzler's prose. The attention both men pay to the accurate reproduction of speech is motivated by the fact that it has important implications for characterisation.

6.2.3 Social Criticism

The spread of Darwinism throughout Europe led to a growth of interest in the physical and social sciences in the latter part of the nineteenth century. A glance at the themes with which Chekhov and Schnitzler deal in their works reflects something of the interest that they too took in the scientific, social, economic and even political changes taking place about them.²⁵³ In their stories, they are concerned not just with the presentation of human psychology, but also with the practical and social problems that confronted men and women at the turn-of-the-century. Many of the themes of their stories and plays are those with which the

²⁵³In their broad discussion about Naturalism at the turn of the century, Bradbury and McFarlane cite 'the conflict of individual aspiration and social obligation, the pull of personal inclination against the duties of kinship, the clash of tradition and self-fulfilment' as examples of the 'terrible conflicts that so preoccupied the late 19th century' (Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, 'Movements, Magazines and Manifestos: The Succession from Naturalism', in Modernism: 1890-1930, edited by Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, Pelican Guides to European Literature (Harmondsworth, 1985 (1976), pp.192-205, (p.196)). They go on to name 'heredity, environment, strict moral imperatives, the coercions of politics, press, religion,' among 'the personal forces that pressed on the late 19th century individual' (ibid). Chekhov and Schnitzler both give due attention to a number of these concerns.

In their literature and in their private lives, both men show an awareness of contemporary social issues, possessing a social conscience which ensured the regular occurrence in their plays and stories of such themes as duelling, prostitution, anti-semitism, social injustice, moral hypocrisy, and many others besides. Schnitzler's associations with Jung Wien, whose members were drawn largely from the Jewish leisured class and whose literature, in the eyes of many critics, was the epitome of Impressionism and Decadence, led many to believe that Schnitzler's literary works were also socially disengaged. This view, however, ignores not only the passion with which he addressed certain fundamental social issues in stories like Leutnant Gustl, but also the importance which such issues held for him in real

²⁵⁴Several critics examine the influence of Naturalism on Schnitzler and particularly Chekhov. Duncan, for instance, in an analysis of Chekhov's Припадок, explores the influence of Bernard's experimental method on Chekhov, (Phillip A.Duncan, 'Chekhov's "An Attack of Nerves" as "Experimental" Narrative', in Debreczeny etc., pp.112-23). Few place Chekhov in the mainstream of European Naturalism, however; Grossman sees the influence of Darwin and the French Moderns, particularly Flaubert, Zola and Maupassant, as having had a hand in the shaping of Chekhov's artistic outlook but goes on to argue that Chekhov's notion of humanity as the highest spiritual hallmark is one important characteristic of his art which distinguishes him from the 'thoroughbred' Naturalists, (Leonid Grossman, 'The Naturalism of Chekhov', in Robert L.Jackson, Chekhov: A Collection of Critical Essays (New Jersey, 1967), pp.32-49 (p.47)). Viduetskaia asserts that Chekhov 'избрал своим героем...того человека, которого так охотно изображали натуралисты. Но он показал его с такой степенью внимания к его индивидуальности, к его внутреннему миру, с какой модернисты подходили только к личности исключительной, оригинальной, утонченной' (I.P.Viduetskaia, 'Место Чехова в истории Русского реализма', Известия Академии Наук СССР. серия литературы и языка, 25/i(1966), 31-42 (p.39)). Schnitzler's concern with psychological verisimilitude, and his acute social conscience have led critics like Swales to regard him primarily as a realist, and his play Liebelei, as an example of 'psychological Naturalism' (Martin Swales, Arthur Schnitzler: A Critical Study (Oxford, 1971), p.183).

life. So acutely did both he and Chekhov feel an obligation to combat corruption and serve the common good, that it was by no means uncommon for either of them to uphold what they believed to be right in defiance of adverse popular reaction. An untiring critic of institutionalised religion and politics, Schnitzler endured anti-semitic provocation throughout his life, and himself faced a disciplinary tribunal after exposing in Leutnant Gustl what he saw as the rampant hypocrisy of the Habsburg military. It is also indicative of Schnitzler's finely tuned social conscience that he adopted a pacifist stance during the Great War when many of his literary peers lent their support to the German and Austrian propaganda effort. Chekhov likewise demonstrated a consistent awareness of social issues in spite of the charge that, in stories like Воры, for instance, where many felt he should have condemned his horse-thieving characters explicitly, he was not socially committed enough. His altruistic trip to the penal colony of Sakhalin was nothing if not a conspicuous manifestation of a high level of social awareness. It was by no means the only one. We should remember that throughout his life, Chekhov was a devoted servant of the local community, wherever he happened to be, helping to improve the lot of his fellow men and women wherever and however possible. We remember too the courageous role played by Chekhov in the Dreyfus Affair, in adopting an unreservedly critical stance against the anti-semitic faction, which included some of his closest associates, and most influential friends, notably Suvorin. It was indeed as a result of his deep sense of social commitment that Chekhov refused to be sidetracked by clichés and platitudes. Thus in such peasant stories as Мужики, В овраге, Воры, Бабы, Моя жизнь, Новая дача, Chekhov is honest enough not just to depict the hardships suffered by the peasantry, but also to expose the peasants themselves as partially responsible for their plight.

Chekhov and Schnitzler did not, however, share the Naturalist's idealistic conviction that the purpose of art was to implement social and political reform. Both men adopted Naturalistic techniques simply in order to depict the realities of contemporary society as they saw them.²⁵⁵ This objective was inspired by a common sense of honesty and social responsibility.

6.3 Symbolism: Metaphorical Use of Language

As has already been elucidated, Chekhov and Schnitzler were not afraid of transgressing the limits of Impressionism for their own artistic ends, filtering various stylistic elements appropriate to their needs. Thus along with an Impressionistic inclination, tempered with regular excursions into Naturalism, there also exist certain Symbolist elements. The symbolism of Chekhov and Schnitzler, however, bears little relation to that of the French Symbolists in the 1880s and 1890s, and had little affinity with the notion of symbolism for its own sake as often entailed by those literary schools which proclaimed

²⁵⁵Moravcevic touches on this point when he remarks, of Chekhov, that he 'remained throughout his life favourably inclined toward a materialistic view of reality, but...never absorbed a significant measure of that ideological dogmatism which characterized some of his naturalist contemporaries' (Nicholas Moravcevic, 'Chekhov and Naturalism: From Affinity to Divergence', Comparative Drama, 4(1970), 219-40 (p.224).

the manifesto of 'l'art pour l'art'.²⁵⁶ Symbolism in Chekhov and Schnitzler plays very much a subordinate role to the role played by realistic elements in their work. Those symbols we do find are essentially unambiguous and should usually, first and foremost, be understood literally within their narrative context. In addition, however, they carry associations which resonate on a non-literal level lending additional depth, colour, and relevance to the work as a whole. The symbolism of Chekhov and Schnitzler is a symbolism of suggestion and allusion, clarifying, illuminating, embellishing, but never obscuring the literal meaning of a text.

We have already touched on the notion of symbolic association in the discussion about the suggestive properties of minor details above. Symbolism in both Chekhov and Schnitzler is commonly associated with

²⁵⁶In his article, 'What is Symbolism?', in Balakian (editor), pp.17-28, René Wellek attempts to throw light on the confusion that surrounds the various definitions of Symbolism. 'The Symbolist symbol', he writes, 'has its special character: simple replacement and the suggestion of mystery' (Wellek, p.27). For Vajda, French Symbolism was 'particularly suited to the expression of...decadence: escape from workaday triviality...in a peculiar and refined aestheticism, in the cult of the extra-ordinary, of the exceptional, and in pessimism and morbidity' (Vajda, p.33). In contrast, Chudakov argues, with reference to Chekhov, in favour of a less self-conscious approach to symbolism. Chekhov's symbols, says Chudakov, 'are drawn from among everyday objects which, unlike say Maeterlinck's symbols, are not specially picked' (Chudakov, p.131). Symbolism in Chekhov, as in Schnitzler, is characterised neither by this element of 'mystery' nor by 'refined aestheticism', but simply by an element of suggestiveness.

meteorological and atmospheric conditions.²⁵⁷ Storms, rain, darkness, as found in such stories as Die Toten schweigen, Der blinde Geronimo und sein Bruder, Sterben, are often associated with notions of emotional turmoil, anxiety, melancholy, while references to light and warmth relate to concepts of happiness, optimism, and love. A similar correspondence between meteorological conditions and psychological states obtains in some of Chekhov's stories. In Ба́ье царство, for example, Anna associates snow with freedom and the innocence of childhood:

За ночь навалило много нового снега, деревья оделись в белое, и воздух был необыкновенно светел, прозрачен и нежен, так что когда Анна Акимовна поглядела в окно, то ей, прежде всего, захотелось вздохнуть глубоко-глубоко. А когда она умывалась, остаток давнего детского чувства, - радость, что сегодня Рождество, вдруг шевельнулась в ее груди, и после этого стало легко, свободно и чисто на душе, как будто и душа умылась или окунулась в белый снег. (VIII, p.269)

In both Chekhov and Schnitzler, natural images are invested with associations which add elements of poeticism over and above the literal meaning. Chekhov, however, did not confine his choice of 'symbolic' imagery to images of weather and light. In Человек в футляре, his description of Belikov's habits is suggestive of physical and, by extension, spiritual claustrophobia. His bedroom is 'box-like', he sleeps in a four-poster bed, he never

²⁵⁷Nardroff draws attention to the symbolic role of weather in Dr. Gräsler, Badearzt, showing how sunshine and rain, Summer and Winter are intrinsically linked with the doctor's state of mind. Nardroff emphasises the secondary nature of Schnitzler's symbolism, pointing out that he is not a symbolist as such but a psychological realist who resorts to symbolist methods as a means of revealing the psychology of his characters. In this he summarises the essence not just of Schnitzler's symbolist art but Chekhov's as well. In an article on colour symbolism, Alexander attempts to elucidate what he claims to be the underlying symbolic significance of Schnitzler's use of colour, (Theodor Alexander, 'Aspects of Imagery in Schnitzler: Colour and Light', Journal of the International Arthur Schnitzler Research Association, 3 ii/iii(1964), 4-15).

goes out without his umbrella and galoshes. Such details, in addition to their literal meaning, also symbolise the wider implications of Belikov's character, functioning as metaphors for his myopic outlook on life. For Mar'ia in На поезде, a passing train has connotations with the passing of time, precipitating a retrospective look at her life as a child and underlining the fleeting, transient nature of existence. In Архиерей, the Easter setting of the story has associations with suffering and death which are echoed in the bishop's own experiences, as he draws near to the end of his life. Chekhov also uses the symbol of Easter to ironic effect in juxtaposing the hopes of resurrection implicit in the Easter story with the bishop's rapid disappearance from the memory of the local people.

Schnitzler's use of symbolic images is most conspicuous in his portrayal of dreams, a fact which emphasises his interest in the kind of issues which occupied Freud and his fellow psychoanalysts.²⁵⁸ Traumnovelle, his most overtly symbolic dream-novella,²⁵⁹ is full of symbolic images associated with the polarity of life and death, reality and illusion. Fridolin's costume, Albertine's mask, symbolise the deception which infiltrates their relationship; the fancy dress party symbolises the unleashing of the anarchic side of Fridolin's character; his experiences in the mortuary, as he fantasises with what he believes to be the body of the

²⁵⁸It should be noted that Schnitzler always considered Freud's theory of dreams too limiting, although there is no doubt he admired Freud's intellect and originality. In a letter to his daughter of 29 October 1929, he writes: 'Ich denke du hast eine neue Ausgabe der Traumdeutung gelesen; - ich vor bald 30 Jahren die allererste; - damals hatt ich (und habe heute noch) manche Bedenken (womit ich Freuds Größe nicht anzuzweifeln gedenke.-)' (B II, pp.502-03).

²⁵⁹See Hertha Krotkoff, 'Themen, Motive und Symbole in Arthur Schnitzlers "Traumnovelle"', MAL, 5 i/ii(1972), 70-95, for a more detailed discussion of this story.

mysterious lady who had saved his life the previous night, is symbolic of the association between love and death; the couple's child represents unity, rationality and security in a dangerous and irrational world. The dream images are the symbols of the unconscious, illuminating the complexities of the human psyche.

In the small number of 'fairy-tale' stories of which Die Geschichte eines Genies, Die drei Elixire, Um eine Stunde, Die dreifache Warnung are all examples, symbolism, in the form of allegory, occupies a prominent and important place. Fantastical images, as symbols of the universal, are used to facilitate the elucidation of common philosophical problems. Die Geschichte eines Genies, for example, may be seen as an allegory of the artist's experience in life. A butterfly symbolises the creative genius, the artist, the exceptional human being; the butterfly's journey through the countryside denotes the genius's quest for perfection, its destination symbolising the goal of the artist/genius's aspirations. The joys, setbacks and illusions experienced by the creative being in real life are reproduced allegorically in the microcosmic world of the butterfly as it sets out on its journey, full of hope and wonder, only to end the day trampled under foot by a careless human being. In Die Hirtenflöte, Schnitzler employs a deliberate symbolism of names with a view to associating the characters with a particular philosophical outlook and mode of behaviour. The husband's name, Erasmus, with its obvious overtones of wisdom and learning, closely reflects the kind of man he is, rational, calculating, level-headed. His wife is called Dionysia, a name whose Bacchanalian associations closely correspond to her essentially hedonistic and tempestuous character. The choice of names highlights, by way of symbolic allusion, the gulf between the two extremes which each protagonist represents. The symbolism of Schnitzler's fantastical

stories is, as here, highly poetic and contrived, in contrast to the less obtrusive symbolism of his realistic stories. It is in these realistic stories, however, that Schnitzler, like Chekhov, rejects symbolism per se, yet is happy to employ symbolist techniques to illustrate more clearly what he sees as the realities of everyday life.

From the foregoing examination of some of the stylistic aspects of their work, it is clear that, in order to depict external and internal reality as they saw it, Chekhov and Schnitzler adopt an eclectic and essentially similar approach to literature, drawing on methods and techniques associated with a variety of literary traditions.²⁶⁰ Neither Chekhov nor Schnitzler regarded himself as the adherent of any single literary movement. For both men the notion of artistic autonomy, the freedom to write in whichever way suited their interests best, was of paramount importance. The emphasis on psychology and mood that we can discern in their work, and the techniques they frequently employed to reflect this, might suggest a particular affinity on their part with Impressionistic principles, but theirs is an Impressionism tempered with features of Naturalism and Symbolism. In spite of dissimilarities in terms of range of technique and focus of emphasis, the main principle governing and uniting both men's work is clearly that of artistic autonomy. In the pursuit of their artistic goals, Chekhov and Schnitzler exploit every means at their disposal. In so doing, both men subscribe fully to the notion of the 'free artist'.

²⁶⁰ Shakh-Azizova alludes directly to this eclectic approach of Chekhov when she argues that although he is 'богат...чисто импрессионистическими эффектами и деталями, он и натуралист и символичен. Емкий чеховский реализм вбирает в себя, синтезирует всё то, что могло бы стать принадлежностью других направлений' (Shakh-Azizova, p.143).

CHAPTER 7
ЧЕРНЫЙ МОНАХ, STERBEN,
ДАМА С СОБАЧКОЙ, DIE TOTEN SCHWEIGEN - A
CRITICAL COMPARISON

In previous chapters, an attempt has been made to outline and compare certain common features in the shorter prose work of Chekhov and Schnitzler. By now considering four stories in detail, this chapter aims to bring together and illustrate a number of the points made earlier in more general terms. For the purpose of this critical comparison, Черный монах (1894), Sterben (1892), Дама с собачкой (1899) and Die Toten schweigen (1897) have been chosen. The choice of these four stories is based on several factors. In so far as any of their stories can be said to be truly typical, these four are broadly representative of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's shorter prose, dealing not only with the kind of themes that recur regularly elsewhere, but also in the kind of ways that we associate with the majority of their stories.²⁶¹ They incorporate many of the main similarities in Chekhov's and Schnitzler's prose, as well as some of the more conspicuous dissimilarities. All four stories were written at a significant time in the literary career of both men; the 1890s was the period of Chekhov's maturest work as a writer, and of what many regard as Schnitzler's most proficient. Above all, they serve well as an illustration of some of the main tenets of this thesis. While acknowledging that by concentrating on just two stories each, proper justice cannot be done to Chekhov's and Schnitzler's full thematic and technical scope, the choice of these particular four stories is designed to permit discussion of the widest range of

²⁶¹Of the four stories, Черный монах is the one that may perhaps be seen as least typical. The striking images and bizarre story line that Chekhov gives us in his portrayal of a man gripped by megalomania contrast with the 'actionless' scenes from everyday life that we are used to in most of Chekhov's later stories.

topics.

Attention is focused on both thematic and technical matters, as well as on non-textual factors such as social history and biography. An examination of the influence of medicine in the four stories is followed by a survey of the major themes, whereby it is hoped to compare and contrast Chekhov's and Schnitzler's attitudes to common concerns and interests. Investigation of certain technical aspects of the stories aims to further highlight affinities between their creative method and approach. The chapter concludes with an examination of those features that bear witness to the different cultural traditions from which both men emanated.

7.1 Common Themes

7.1.1 Medicine and the Portrayal of Psychology

The theme of medicine that we see throughout a great deal of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's work is much in evidence in all of the chosen stories except perhaps Дама с собачкой. The medical allusions we find in them bear witness to the influence of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's medical background on their literary work. This is particularly the case in Черный монах and Sterben, stories in which the main plot consists of the psychological and physical decline of the protagonists. Both stories can be viewed in terms of medical case studies. Chekhov's writing of Черный монах coincided with a period of growing interest in psychology and with the Decadent literature of the late nineteenth century, characterised in Chekhov's view, by its morbid

preoccupation with psychopathology.²⁶² Schnitzler wrote Sterben at a time, 'wo [ihn] der "Fall" mehr interessiert hat als die Menschen'.²⁶³ Both stories, however, are written with the authority of people for whom contact with the sick is an everyday occurrence. In them, Chekhov and Schnitzler convincingly show 'wie häßlich das Krankensein ist...' (I, p.150). The main protagonists in both stories suffer from tuberculosis. The portrayal of the disease reveals an accurate knowledge of its symptoms and treatment. Kovrin and Felix experience serious coughing and a weakening of the limbs; they are treated in the only way medicine knew how, being given milk to drink²⁶⁴ and advised to rest and keep warm; (accordingly, Kovrin moves south to the Crimea, Felix to Merano in the South Tirol). As they die, both men are seen to cough blood. Minor though such details seem to be, they reflect the intimate knowledge that Chekhov and Schnitzler, through their medical work, had of the disease. We see the same accuracy of medical detail in Schnitzler's portrayal of nervous shock as experienced by Emma after the accident in Die Toten schweigen. At first, Emma cannot comprehend that Franz is dead. '"Es ist nicht wahr"', she says, '"Es kann nicht sein. Ist denn Ihnen

²⁶²Chekhov had been reading the work of Max Nordau and others. In a letter to Suvorin on 27 March 1894 he writes: 'Я свободен от постоа. Рассуждения всякие мне надоели, а таких свистунов, как Макс Нордау, я читаю просто с отвращением' (V, p.284). In another letter, this time to E.M.Shavrova, written on 28 February 1895, Chekhov stresses the importance of an intimate knowledge of psychiatry: 'Чтобы решать вопросы о вырождении, психозах и т.п., надо быть знакомым с ними научно' (VI, p.29).

²⁶³Letter to Hofmannsthal, 10 December 1903, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Briefwechsel mit Arthur Schnitzler (Frankfurt, 1964), p.179 .

²⁶⁴In several of Chekhov's works, milk has connotations of mediocrity and domesticity. Like, for example, Maria's milk-pots in Учитель словесности, here too the reference to milk is an allusion to 'пошлость'.

was geschehen? Und mir..." (I, p.303).²⁶⁵ Disbelief soon turns to panic, however, and abandoning her lover, Emma flees the scene of the accident to arrive home in a state of mental and physical exhaustion. Like Schnitzler, Chekhov clearly understood the effects of emotional shock.

In Черный монах and Sterben, it is mental rather than physical illness that interests Chekhov and Schnitzler most. In the figures of Kovrin and Felix, they give us studies of megalomania and schizophrenia respectively.²⁶⁶ From the start of Черный монах, we know that Kovrin's mental condition is dubious, as he has been advised to take a rest by his doctor. In the early stages of Kovrin's illness, he himself recognises his hallucinations as a symptom of nervous disorder. He thus knows his conversations with the monk to be a figment of an inflamed imagination, the sense of well-being, confidence, and self-esteem, which the monk inspires, the symptoms of a diseased mind. Chekhov goes beyond the medical implications of Kovrin's illness, however, to explore its philosophical aspects. Kovrin is led to believe that he is in some way different from others, that he is superior and special, and he derives great personal satisfaction from the delusion. The happiness he feels from this new found self-confidence evaporates with his cure, leaving only feelings of resentment. The question Chekhov asks in the story as a whole is voiced by Kovrin explicitly:

²⁶⁵In Попрыгунья, Olga also reacts to Дымов's death with incredulity: '-Дымов!- звала она его, трепля его за плечо и не веря тому, что он уже никогда не проснется. -Дымов, Дымов же!' (VIII, p31).

²⁶⁶This diagnosis is supplied by Weiss, who devotes an article to categorising the mental illnesses found in Schnitzler's work. See Robert O.Weiss, 'The Psychoses in the Works of A.Schnitzler', German Quarterly, (1968), pp.377-400 (pp.384-85).

- Зачем, зачем вы меня лечили?...Я сходил с ума, у меня была мания величия, но зато я был весел, бодр и даже счастлив, я был интересен и оригинален. Теперь я стал рассудительнее и солиднее, но зато я такой, как все: я - посредственность, мне скучно жить... О как вы жестоко поступили со мной! Я видел галлюцинации, но кому это мешало? Я спрашиваю: кому это мешало? (VIII, p.251)

It is the question of whether to find happiness and fulfilment through belief in harmless illusions, or to content oneself with the banality of a mediocre existence in the real world. Kovrin prefers to believe in his illusions.

In Sterben, Schnitzler concentrates more on the medical and psychological implications of Felix's illness, depicting the development of his schizophrenia with the accuracy of a trained psychiatrist.²⁶⁷ Felix's schizophrenia is reflected in the vacillatory nature of his moods, and in the erratic nature of his relations with Marie and Alfred. As Felix is consumed by fear of dying alone, he becomes increasingly estranged from those close to him. A sense of insecurity engenders feelings of hostility, paranoia, and cynicism as seen, for example, in a deliberately resentful exchange soon after the diagnosis is first made: "'Lieber Mensch, der Doktor, wie?'" he says of Alfred to Marie, "'Oh ja." "Und jung und gesund und hat vielleicht noch vierzig Jahre vor sich - oder hundert"' (E I, p.109). By the time Felix dies, his neurosis is all-consuming. Although Felix's terminal illness is of a physical origin, the novella is, ironically a study in mental deterioration. Obsessional fear, as Weiss tells us, is the cause of that deterioration, growing irritability, self-pity, and

²⁶⁷See Schnitzler's letter to Hofmannsthal of 10 December 1903, quoted above. Schnitzler himself takes the view that the story has too great an affinity with the medical case-history. As a result, he tends to distance himself from this and other early stories.

irrationality are its symptoms.

In the figure of Alfred, Schnitzler gives us his most stereotypical portrait of the physician. Portrayed as a competent practitioner, a man of integrity, a reliable friend, and rational advisor, Alfred is an idealised figure, difficult to emulate in real life. Schnitzler makes clear that Alfred's greatest asset is his ability to act both in a professional and private capacity. Where necessary, he administers treatment in the role of medical practitioner, but his relationship with Felix is primarily of a personal nature. It is as a friend, concerned about the welfare of a person dear to him, that Alfred withholds the truth about Felix's condition: '"Ich danke dir herzlich für deinen guten Willen,"' Felix says to Alfred, '"du hast als Freund gehandelt,..."' (E I, p.107). Alfred's friendship is strong enough to withstand Felix's growing hostility and extends unconditionally to those nearest to him. His concern for Marie's physical and mental wellbeing is as acute as it is for Felix's. He speaks with the voice of reason and pragmatism in his advice not just to his sick friend but also to Marie for whom he represents a source of comfort and moral support. The idealistic colours in which Schnitzler paints Alfred's portrait, as representative of the medical profession, are largely typical of Schnitzler's doctor-figures in general, and contrast with the less idealistically portrayed doctors of Chekhov's works. Schnitzler gives us a second doctor in Sterben, in the figure of the consultant Bernard, who first diagnoses Felix's terminal illness, and although Bernard remains a peripheral character, his presence in the story further reflects the medical influence on Schnitzler's literature. Indeed, the disproportionately large number of characters, in three of the four stories, who have connections with medicine and science, are the most striking evidence of this influence on both Chekhov and

Schnitzler. In neither Черный монах nor Дама с собачкой do we encounter a physician who plays as important a role as Alfred does in Sterben, yet it is significant that Kovrin, like Felix, also has a friend in the medical profession. Another friend, his father-in-law to be, Pesotskiĭ, though not a doctor, is a man of science, a horticulturalist and Darwinist. Emma's husband in Die Toten schweigen is also a medical practitioner, (it is because he is away at a meeting at the 'Professorenkollegium' that Emma can meet secretly with Franz), and although none of the characters in Дама с собачкой are doctors, it is interesting that Gurov still frequents a 'докторский клуб' (X, p.137). The extent to which medical personnel are thus represented in their plays and stories is typical of much of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's literary output. In terms of the composition at large, however, they can be said to be highly over-represented.

The understanding of human psychology that medicine gave to both men is also seen clearly in all four stories. In each of them, particular emphasis is laid on the interaction of the protagonists, whereby we gain some idea of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's grasp of the subtleties of human behaviour. The reactions of the protagonists to each other, their emotions, their attitudes, are psychologically plausible and recognisable within the scope of common human experience. They behave in ways with which we instinctively empathise. In Sterben, for example, Schnitzler traces a logically determined shift in the psychology of the protagonists. On hearing that Felix has only a year to live, Marie declares her intention to die with him when the time comes. Felix recognises that Marie's promise is one that she might come to regret and retorts '"Nein,...laß das. ...Ich muß gehen, und du mußt bleiben"' (E I, p.105). At the end of the Novella the roles are reversed, with Felix

insisting that she holds by her word, and Marie opting for self-survival. At one time prepared to sacrifice herself for the sake of her lover, Marie finds that the instinct for survival is too powerful to resist. And Felix, formerly adamant that Marie should go on living after his death, ultimately resorts to attempted homicide lest he be made to die alone. This change is entirely plausible in terms of natural human behaviour. Marie, shattered by the prospect of losing the man she loves, is rendered incapable of rational thought. Blinded by the love she bears Felix, she sees no happier alternative than to die with him. Felix meanwhile has not had time to consider the implications of the doctor's verdict fully, and sees Marie's decision as an irrational over-reaction. In the course of time, however, Marie begins to realise that her love for Felix is not everything and that there is nothing more valuable on earth than life itself. Her estrangement from him is hastened by Felix's increasingly irrational behaviour and hostility, although his actions are logically determined by the insecurity he feels at the prospect of dying alone. Felix's irrational behaviour at the end of the novella is the product of chronic fear neurosis, while Marie's actions are determined by the instinct of self-preservation.

A similar transition from mutual love to mutual hatred is mirrored in Kovrin and Tania's relationship in Черный монах. Their love for each other is undermined by domestic irritations, but also by the pressures of social conformity.²⁶⁸ Tania is unable to tolerate being neglected by a 'madman' who prefers the company of his

²⁶⁸Tania conforms to the dictates of society at large by having Kovrin returned to 'normality', regardless of the fact that his delusions did neither him nor anyone else any harm. We see this kind of social pressure to conform in Chekhov's Палата но.6 also, where conversing with the inmates of a mental ward is deemed to be a sign of mental abnormality.

hallucinations to that of his wife. Kovrin resents Tania's attempts to have him restored to normality and to social respectability. Growing bitterness forces the two farther and farther apart until by the end their hatred reaches new depths of intensity:

Я ненавижу тебя всею моею душой и желаю, чтобы ты скорее погиб... О, как я страдаю! Мую душу жжет невыносимая боль... Будь ты проклят. Я приняла тебя за необыкновенного человека, за гения, я полюбила тебя, но ты оказался сумасшедшим... (VIII, p.255)

Chekhov depicts the deterioration of their relationship with less subtlety than Schnitzler, but then Chekhov is here more interested in the philosophical rather than the psychological implications of the story. In Дама с собачкой, Chekhov again depicts the changing psychology of a human relationship, but this time one of growing harmony. Anna, young and impressionable, on holiday away from her husband for the first time, finds the temptations of an illicit affair too exciting to resist. Once the affair is consummated, Anna feels guilty and abused. Gurov, on the other hand, acts in the manner that his many adulterous experiences have taught him, at first with self-confidence and charm, but with diminishing sensitivity. The irony of Chekhov's story lies in the fact that both characters change in unexpected ways. Gurov realises to his surprise that he loves Anna, and for the first time in his life becomes emotionally dependent on another person. His inability to preserve the kind of emotional distance which characterised his former affairs renders him vulnerable and unconfident, as evidenced by the nervous manner in which he confronts Anna at the theatre. Emotional turmoil now rules where rational pragmatism once held sway. As for Anna, her sure-footed reaction and her subsequent pragmatic attitude to the relationship as a whole suggests that she has matured quickly and become the more rational of the two. As they enjoy each other's company in secretly

arranged rendezvous, neither of them forgets the problems that they face.

7.1.2 The Polarity of Life and Death

The notion of freedom, which was so important to both Chekhov's and Schnitzler's basic philosophy, is equated in Sterben with Marie's love of life. At one point early on in the story Felix remarks '"Komm, ich muß ins Freie"' (E I, p.114)²⁶⁹ but it is Marie who is naturally attracted to the open air, the countryside, the company of other people, and it is Felix who finds himself confined to the stuffiness of the sickroom. Schnitzler makes it clear that Marie's love of life, her 'Freude des Daseins' (E I, p.150), however much she pretends to ignore it, is a legitimate and healthy love.²⁷⁰ In Die Toten schweigen, Emma also rejects self-sacrifice in favour of survival by abandoning Franz and returning to Vienna, 'in das Licht, in den Lärm, zu den Menschen' (E I, p.306). To Emma, freedom lies in the avoidance of social scandal.

In Sterben, Felix resents the fact that Marie will continue enjoying life after he dies, and like many of Schnitzler's characters faced with the prospect of imminent death, his inclination is 'sich mit seinem ganzen Wesen in den gegenwärtigen Moment [zu] versenken' (E I, p.132). Chekhov's characters are less fatalistic and equate 'living to the full' with creating a sense of purpose for themselves. In Черный монах, the monk provides Kovrin with just this by assuring him that he is morally and intellectually superior to the 'common herd'.

²⁶⁹The German word for 'open-air', 'das Freie', from the adjective 'frei', has the extra connotation of 'freedom'. Interestingly, there is a similar connection in the Russian word 'приволье'.

²⁷⁰Marie, we are told, 'gehört der Freude, dem Leben, sie darf wieder jung sein' (E I, p.125). Her estrangement from Felix is the logical development of her natural inclinations.

'Ты один из тех.' says the monk,

...которые по справедливости называются
избранниками божьими. Ты служишь вечной правде.
...Вся твоя жизнь [носит] на себе божественную,
небесную печать, так как посвящены они разумному
и прекрасному, то есть тому, что вечно.
(VIII, p.241-42)

Kovrin looks for his freedom in an illusory world and finds there happiness and self-fulfilment. In Дама с собачкой, the constraint imposed on the freedom of Gurov and Anna by the need to conform to social conventions makes their ability to enjoy life all the more difficult. What the characters in all four stories have in common is their search for the freedom of a happy and fulfilling existence.

The prospect of a bright future is not the only motivation behind their actions, however. At the opposite end of the scale, they know that death, be it literal or metaphorical, stares them in the face. Kovrin, for example, having glimpsed the possibility of happiness and self-fulfilment in his conversations with the monk, is unable to cope with the mundane realities of everyday life. Gurov and Anna, having discovered in their love for each other new meaning to their lives, find the relative sterility of their domestic existence harder to bear. Felix, given six months to live by his doctor, is haunted by the inevitability of physical death, while Emma is frightened both by physical death, as glimpsed in Franz's lifeless face, and by the prospect of social ostracism. Here, as elsewhere in his work, we notice that Schnitzler lays much greater emphasis on the theme of physical death. Even the titles, Sterben and Die Toten schweigen, reflect this emphasis.²⁷¹ Schnitzler consistently explores

²⁷¹These are not by any means the only such examples. Compare, for instance, Der Tod des Junggesellen, Der tote Gabriel, Der Mörder, Der Witwer.

the effects of death on the living and the extent to which the prospect of imminent death alters the value his characters put on life itself. In Sterben and Die Toten schweigen life and death are contrasted and juxtaposed. 'Wenn man am Sterben ist,' observes Felix in the first of these, 'gibt's keine Heimat mehr. Das Lebenkönnen ist die Heimat' (E I, p.156). Nowhere is this juxtaposition more clearly defined than where Marie, towards the end of Sterben, reflects on what life will be like after Felix has died:

Aber dann wird er starr daliegen, tot, man wird ihn begraben, und er wird tief in der Erde ruhen auf einem stillen Friedhof, über den die Tage gleichförmig hinziehen werden, während er vermodert. Und sie wird leben, sie wird unter Menschen sein, während sie doch draußen ein stummes Grab weiß, wo er ruht, - er! den sie geliebt hat! (E I, p.171)

Here, Schnitzler graphically emphasises the contrast between 'being' and 'non-being', between life and human interaction on the one hand, and death and decay on the other. Death itself is disorientating and unnerving: 'Der Gedanke an den nahen Tod' (E I p.113) turns Felix into a psychopath incapable of objective reasoning. The imminence of death distorts Felix's perception of the world, making Felix himself the focal point of his perceptions. People and things around him are viewed only in terms of how they effect him.

In Felix, Schnitzler examines the psychology of a dying man. In Emma, he examines the psychology of a woman whose has just witnessed the death of her lover. But where Felix's instincts of self-preservation are determined by his terror of dying alone, Emma's will to live is conditioned primarily by her need to avoid the stigma of adultery. By abandoning Franz, she hopes to dissociate herself from the evidence that can only spell her eventual ruin. Her freedom is not won that easily, however, and, consumed by guilt and remorse, she is

forced into a new struggle of loyalties, loyalty to her deceased lover on the one hand, and loyalty to her husband on the other. Ironically, it is as if her confession, threatening the extinction of her social and domestic life, is forced out of her by her dead lover. Franz's death reveals to Emma new depths of insight, enabling her to reassess her sense of morality. As in Sterben, where Felix's impending death leads Marie to the realisation that there is nothing more important in life than life itself, the death of a loved one is often the catalyst for a reexamination of personal values.

The difference of emphasis that Chekhov and Schnitzler generally place on the theme of death is clearly evident in each of the stories. In both Sterben and Die Toten schweigen death is central to the plot. In Дама с собачкой, on the other hand, there is no significant mention of death whatsoever, and in Черный монах, it plays only a minor role; indeed, references to death in this story have the effect of highlighting Chekhov's interest in different attitudes to life. By contrast to Felix, for instance, Pesotskiĭ is not concerned about the prospect of dying per se, but about what will happen to his orchards when he dies (VIII, p.236). Chekhov thus uses the theme of death as a tool of characterisation, enabling him to show the reader that Pesotskiĭ is a man utterly preoccupied with the upkeep of his estate. Even though Kovrin, suffering from tuberculosis, cannot ignore the possibility of dying soon, his reactions to the prospect are deliberately omitted because they are irrelevant to the main philosophical issues of the stories.²⁷²

²⁷²This is not the case in other stories like Гусев, Архиерей, and certain other stories. In these, Chekhov makes death, and the psychology of the dying, one of the central themes.

The attention Schnitzler pays to physical death is matched by Chekhov's attention to the metaphorical death of spiritual stagnation. The distinction Schnitzler makes between life and death corresponds to the one Chekhov makes between self-fulfilment and spiritual inertia. This distinction is clearly drawn in Черный монах in the figures of Kovrin on the one hand, as he sees himself whilst under the influence of the monk, and his father-in-law Pesotskiĭ on the other. Spiritual poverty characterises Pesotskiĭ's entire life-style; he has no interests apart from horticulture; in his management of the estate he is brutish, regimented, unimaginative; even the layout of the orchard 'дела[ет] картину однообразной и даже скучной' (VIII, p.227). Pesotskiĭ himself is petty and narrow-minded, his relations with other people are constantly strained and coloured by the fact that he sees them as little more than tools of convenience. Kovrin's delusions of grandeur protect him from the mediocrity into which Pesotskiĭ descends. Tania's attempts to have him cured thus arouse his resentment because they remove that protection. Robbed of his delusions, and restored to 'normality', Kovrin is forced to submit to what for him are the petty concerns of married life. His marriage begins to disintegrate, and, finding little comfort in a sordid, extra-marital affair, he becomes deeply dissatisfied with life. 'Пошлость' destroys Kovrin's sense of purpose and self-esteem. Cured of the hallucinations which give meaning to his existence, his life becomes spiritually bankrupt.

In Дама с собачкой, Gurov and Anna experience a tension between self-fulfilment and stagnation, on the one hand in the prospect of potential happiness which their love for each other offers, and on the other in their disenchantment with their married lives. Gurov's marriage has long ceased to fulfil him either spiritually

or physically. His life in Moscow is one of boredom and inertia. Likewise, Anna derives little self-fulfilment from her marriage to a colourless and banal husband. For both Gurov and Anna, the excitement of an illicit affair heightens their sensitivity to the potentialities of life. Just as Marie and Felix, Emma and Franz, bear out the dichotomy of life and death in the literal sense, the same is true in the figurative sense of Kovrin and Pesotskiĭ, Gurov, Anna and their respective spouses.

7.1.3 The Problem of Human Interaction

The prominence of alienation is undisputed in the works of Chekhov and Schnitzler. For a variety of reasons, which include the innate selfishness of human beings, difficulties of communication, want of creativity, greed, characters find themselves alienated from even the most intimate of friends. In Sterben and Черный монах, the theme of alienation is accentuated in the portrayal of the protagonists' relationships, and it is very significant that both Kovrin's relationship with Tania, and Felix's with Marie, ultimately break down under pressure. In each case it is primarily the men who feel isolated and alone, but whereas the feeling that 'кроме него не было ни одной души' (VIII, p.255) fills Kovrin with disillusioned resignation, Felix's isolation arouses fear. Kovrin feels most isolated when deprived of the friendship and support of his imaginary companion. Cured of his delusions, he is forced to accept the solitude his marriage has come to represent. He and Tania live their own separate lives, a lack of mutual understanding hastening the inevitable breakdown of their marriage. Ultimately, a letter is the only possible form of communication between them (VIII p.255). Unlike Kovrin, who finds companionship in his hallucinations, Felix in Sterben derives only feelings of alienation from his mental derangement. His fear of dying alone induces behaviour that only alienates him further from the one

person who can provide companionship. Marie, on the other hand, reacts instinctively and positively to the threat of isolation by seeking the company of others. As with Kovrin and Tania, mutual mistrust erodes the very foundation of Felix and Marie's relationship. As both become increasingly 'mit ihren eigenen Gedanken beschäftigt' (I, p.123), communication deteriorates.

In Лама с собачкой, the isolation from society Gurov and Anna feel when in each other's company, however, is that of the social outcast, condemned for contravening established social conventions. Their love for each other, however, gives them the courage to face this difficulty. In Die Toten schweigen, there is the suggestion that Emma, unable to cope with the burden of concealed guilt, will confess her adultery to her husband in order to be able to share her secret. The experience of the characters in all four stories presents variations on the theme of loneliness and alienation, depicted here, as in many of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's works, as a fundamental human problem not easily solved.

The failure of relationships is often due to the egotistical attitudes of one or both partners. Successful unions in Chekhov and Schnitzler depend on mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect. That reciprocity is undermined when one of the partners becomes too self-absorbed, and when self-interest makes the egotistic partner blind to the needs and sufferings of the companion. At such times, the relationship is placed under intolerable strain and the partners become increasingly alienated. Schnitzler's egotists are more numerous and generally more striking than those of Chekhov. Felix in Sterben is one of his most vivid, ranking alongside such prime egotists as Georg Wergenthin in Der Weg ins Freie, Fritz Lobheimer in Liebelei, Friedrich Hofreiter in Das Weite Land, and many others in their degree of self-absorption. Felix's obsession with

the prospect of dying alone leaves him totally self-preoccupied. Other people are seen as a threat to divert attention away from himself, with the result that he regards their kindness with the suspicion and hostility of a paranoiac. He treats Marie with increasing enmity, disdaining her love and devotion, and exploiting her sensitivity to gratify his own sense of self-importance.

Whereas Felix at least recognises his egotism, ("Oh", he exclaims at one particularly revealing moment, "Ich Egoist habe ganz das Sommerkleid vergessen" (E I, p.111)), Pesotskiĭ in Черный монах is completely oblivious of it. So long has he been accustomed to having his way in everything, that he ceases to be aware of his insensitivity to others. He manipulates and tyrannises others, including those, like Tania, closest to him, for his own selfish ends, even going so far as to engineer his daughter's marriage to Kovrin for the sake of the estate in the future. Like Felix in Sterben, Pesotskiĭ is callous and brutish in his dealings with others, with little respect for their feelings and sensitivities. Kovrin too displays some of the typical symptoms of an egotistical outlook: resentment, self-pity, melancholia, but, significantly enough, only after he is cured. Under the monk's influence, Kovrin gains not only in self-confidence and esteem, but also in charitability, becoming a more compassionate and understanding individual. Deprived of his hallucinations, he is self-absorbed, brooding, and hostile to those who care most about him. It is only after he reflects on what his life used to be like that his marriage begins to break down. In Дама с собачкой, Gurov's egotistical involvement with women is the product of chauvinistic bravado, and his treatment of them is determined by his own selfish interests. His love for Anna, however, teaches him to respect other people and

enables him to discover that which is noble and virtuous in human beings.²⁷³

The experience of the protagonists in each of the four stories reflects the problematic nature of human relationships that typifies Chekhov's and Schnitzler's portrayal of a great number of other partnerships throughout their work. Successful relationships are rarely to be found in their stories. Both men are more interested in depicting the kind of problems encountered in the attempt to make relationships succeed. Every union, as Gurov in Дама с собачкой has come to learn with respect to his fleeting affairs,

...которое вначале так приятно разнообразит жизнь и представляется милым и легким приключением, у порядочных людей...тяжелых на подъем, нерешительных, неизбежно вырастает в целую задачу, сложную чрезвычайно, и положение в конце концов становится тягостным. (X, p.129)

In Chekhov, it is the relationship between married partners which is most prone to failure, as illustrated in Черный монах and Дама с собачкой. In the latter story, marriage for Gurov is boring and banal, an assumption borne out by the prosaic way in which the routine details of his married life are listed (X, p.128). He looks to extra-marital liaisons to escape its monotony and familiarity, and to find the physical, perhaps even the intellectual, excitement his wife can no longer provide. Kovrin, likewise, quickly grows tired of the banality of domestic life, and abandons his wife to escape from its stultifying effects. His attitude to marriage is unequivocal:

²⁷³This ennobling quality of love contrasts with what Evlakhov sees, in Schnitzler's works, as its essentially egotistic quality: 'Самое ужасное в том, что никакой любви и нет, ибо то, что называется этим именем, есть в сущности чистейший эгоизм, лишь более или менее прикрытый до времени' (Evlakhov, p.22).

Искренно, в глубине души, свою женитьбу на Тане он считал теперь ошибкой, был доволен, что окончательно разошелся с ней, и воспоминание об этой женщине, ...возбуждало в нем одну только жалость и досаду на себя. (VIII, p.254)

For Chekhov's married couples, the danger of boredom and inertia is a constant source of threat.²⁷⁴

For many of Chekhov's characters, like Gurov and Kovrin, and like many of Schnitzler's characters too, extra-marital liaisons provide one possible means of escape from the often failing or already failed marriage. Success in human relationships, however, as Chekhov sees it, depends not just on the physical but also on the intellectual and emotional compatibility of the partners. Gurov's liaisons before meeting Anna, like Kovrin's with Varvara Nikolaevna, are superficial and unfulfilling because there is no spiritual or intellectual bond between them. Even where there is a basis of mutual love and a meeting of hearts and minds, as we find it in Gurov's relationship with Anna, difficulties continue to exist. The need to be seen to conform to the dictates of society compels them to lead a dual existence, arousing feelings of guilt and anxiety. Gurov's advancing age seems only to compound their problems. Gurov's and Anna's experience is symptomatic of what Chekhov sees as the highly complex and problematic nature of relationships in general.

Relationships in both Chekhov and Schnitzler thus rarely provide security. The volatility of human emotions militates against stability in the lives of the

²⁷⁴The long periods of enforced separation from Olga Knipper, which her employment as an actress with the Moscow Arts Theatre necessitated, ensured an element of freshness in Chekhov's own marriage. On the whole, Chekhov and Knipper were both happy with an arrangement which gave them the freedom to enjoy their independence, as well as their togetherness.

characters. Relationships flourish unexpectedly, others fall apart without warning. In Sterben and Die Toten schweigen, Marie and Emma are both bewildered by the disappearance of what they once felt to be inextinguishable love for their partners. In Лама с собачкой, Gurov is no less bewildered by the suddenness and intensity with which he falls in love with Anna. In Черный монах, the success of Kovrin's relationship with Tania is entirely dependent on a figment of his imagination. The common occurrence, in Schnitzler particularly, of incidents of deception and infidelity further undermine hopes for security and stability. Undeterred, even encouraged by this fact, they look to other informal liaisons for the security they know cannot be guaranteed in long-term relationships. Genuine love, unlike physical lust, is uncommon in Schnitzler, being either short-lived, as exemplified by the speed with which Marie's attitude to Felix in Sterben changes, or, as in Die Toten schweigen, illusory; how genuine, after all, can a person's love be who abandons her dead lover as readily as Emma does!

The main exception to this view, in Schnitzler's work, is the relationship between married partners. By contrast with Chekhov, marriage is often depicted by Schnitzler as a potential source of stability. Recognising what they see as the intrinsic value of the marriage bond, Schnitzler's married partners work hard at making their marriages succeed, and although Emma in Die Toten schweigen, by accidentally giving herself away, is obliged by circumstances to confess her guilt, it is nevertheless significant that she experiences a feeling of peace, 'als würde vieles wieder gut...' (E I, p.312). In a world where casual relationships frequently break down, Schnitzler stresses the sanctity of the family unit. Forgiveness as a guarantor of family unity is a theme which he deals with not just in Die Toten schweigen

but in other stories like Die Frau des Weisen and Traumnovelle. In all of these the ability of the married partners to forgive, to work at problems, to compromise, ensures that the family remains intact. Significantly, it is the presence of a child in these three stories that dictates the determination of the parents to find a solution. In Die Toten schweigen, Emma's child acts as a moderating and reconciling influence. It is Emma's concern for the boy that prevents her from acquiescing too hastily in Franz's suggestion that she leave her husband (I p.300). Again, she uses her child as the justification for her actions when she abandons her lover. She returns home not just because she fears a public scandal but also because she wishes to preserve the unity of her family and the security it offers.

In Chekhov, as we would expect, we do not see this emphasis on the family as a sacrosanct whole. The marriage partnerships in Черный монах and Дама с собачкой conform to Chekhov's view of marriage as a union that is difficult to sustain and constantly undermined by social and domestic pressures. Of the marriages of Kovrin to Tania, Anna to her husband, and Gurov to his wife, only Gurov's marriage has produced children, and although his children, by contrast with the children of Schnitzler's married couples, do not succeed in cementing the marital relationship, it is nevertheless significant that Chekhov describes Gurov's love for his children as part of the characterisation of the more tender side of his nature.

Not just in these four stories but throughout Chekhov's and Schnitzler's works, the characters live lives of deception and self-delusion to escape the harsher realities of life. Appearance and reality, illusion and truth, combine to create for the characters an uncertain and unpredictable world. Though perhaps the nature of their illusions may vary, the characters all interact against a background of deception and unreality.

Marital infidelity is one of the commoner forms of deception in these, as in other stories, with Anna, Gurov, Emma, and to a lesser extent Kovrin, all forced to live duplicitous lives on account of their illicit liaisons. In Sterben and Черный монах, illusion manifests itself in the notion of self-deception as the protagonists create for themselves a false reality. Marie convinces herself, out of a deep sense of compassion and duty, that her love for Felix is solid enough to support her decision for self-sacrifice. It is only later, after she has awakened to her life-affirming instincts, that she realises this to be a delusion. Kovrin's entire wellbeing depends on such a delusion, relying, as he does, for his sense of purpose in life on nothing more than a figment of his imagination. The inability of the characters to differentiate the real from the unreal introduces an element of uncertainty into their lives, yet their illusions provide comfort, and shield them from pain and hardship; in Kovrin's case, the pain of knowing oneself to be a mediocrity, in Marie's, the pain of knowing that the 'call of life' is stronger than that of a lover's duty. We notice in these stories that dreams too further hinder the characters' ability to distinguish between reality and illusion.²⁷⁵ Dropping into dreamlike states, they become confused and disorientated, unable to distinguish between past and present, the real and unreal. To Emma in Die Toten schweigen, the events of the night seem 'wie ein böser Traum' (I, p.309); her experience is similar to that of Gurov's in Дама с

²⁷⁵It is interesting that the figure of the black monk came to Chekhov in a dream: 'Во всяком разе если автор изображает психически больного, то это значит, что он сам болен. "Черного монаха" я писал без всяких унылых мыслей, по холодном размышлении. Просто пришла охота изобразить манию величия. Монах же, несущийся через поле, приснился мне, и я, проснувшись утром, рассказал о нем Маше' (Letter to Suvorin, 25 January 1894, V, p.265).

собачкой when, after Anna's departure, he listens to the noises around him 'как будто только что проснулся' (X, p.135). Later in the same story, reality and dream, past and present become increasingly intertwined:

В памяти всё было ясно, точно расстался он с Анной Сергеевной только вчера. И воспоминания разгорались всё сильнее. [...] Воспоминания переходили в мечту, и прошедшее в воображении мешалось с тем, что будет. Анна Сергеевна не снилась ему, а шла за ним всюду, как тень, и следила за ним. Закрывши глаза, он видел ее, как живую. (X, p.136)

In the world of dreams and make-believe, of illusion and willful deception, the distinction between reality and unreality is not clearly defined. The resulting confusion underlines the notion, stated explicitly in Sterben, but also central to Chekhov's philosophical view, 'daß es hier überhaupt kein Wissen und keine Gewißheit gäbe' (E I, p.143).

7.2 Narrative Devices and Techniques

7.2.1 Structural Features

Черный монах, Дама с собачкой, Sterben, and Die Toten schweigen have several structural features in common. They all belong to the рассказ/Novella type of narrative and are narrated in each case by an omniscient third person narrator. Each of them has only a small number of protagonists, and deals with an isolated event or series of events from a relatively short period in their lives. Thematic unity is generally preserved in all four stories by an absence of subplots. The length of narrated time varies from one story to the next, from a few hours in Die Toten schweigen, to a little over six months in Sterben, and to two to three years in Черный монах and Дама с собачкой. Die Toten schweigen is the only story out of the four which depicts continuous action; the other three consist of a selection of incidents over a

period of time. Sterben ranks among Schnitzler's longest stories and is several times longer than any of the other three, and yet, despite its length, remains firmly in the short story/novella tradition.

The markedly episodic structure of Черный монах and Sterben, and less obviously of Дама с собачкой, insofar as it alludes to the 'scenic' structure of the stage-play, is a measure of the debt which both Chekhov and Schnitzler owed to drama. Each of the stories consists of a series of distinct 'scenes' which show the characters in various situations at different stages of their psychological development. The 'scenes' are set chronologically in various geographical locations, lending the narrative a certain novel-like depth and variety.

In Die Toten schweigen, Schnitzler dispenses with an episodic presentation of events because the story depicts continuous action. Similarly, the text of Die Toten schweigen, unlike Черный монах and Дама с собачкой dispenses with numbered sections.²⁷⁶ In Die Toten schweigen, there is a sense of immediacy that approximates to that of the stage-play. His widespread use of interior monologues and direct speech in this story in particular lends it further directness.

As a means of preserving objectivity and conciseness the large majority of stories dispense with authorial intervention. Our four stories are no exception to this general rule. The only commentaries we encounter are those of the participating characters themselves. The reader is invited to read between the lines, to interpret for himself the events and the characters' reactions and

²⁷⁶Sterben is not subdivided into numbered sections either, but the different episodes or scenes are punctuated with clear changes of time, location, and mood.

hence to draw his own conclusions. Of the four stories, Die Toten schweigen and Дама с собачкой are prime examples of this narrative economy. Both consist of only a few pages of text, yet the texture is dense; we discover a great deal about the psychology of the characters as much through what is unsaid as through what is stated explicitly. Like poetry much depends on intimation and innuendo. We understand, for example, the growing intensity of Gurov's love for Anna not so much through the narrator's explicit statements to that effect, but through apparently insignificant though telling details. For the first time in his life, Gurov, we are told, feels compelled to confide in a friend (X, p.136); he becomes nervous and unsure when he sees Anna's dog at the door of her house, and thus knows that Anna herself cannot be far, (X, p.138). In Die Toten schweigen, Emma goes to great lengths in order to avoid recognition, hiding from passers-by, taking the precaution of stopping her carriage a few streets away from where she lives. Such actions betray the intensity of her anxiety more vividly than any explicit statement. Where Chekhov and Schnitzler do tend to differ, however, is in the initial characterisation of the characters. Where Schnitzler generally dispenses with details of his protagonists' biographies, Chekhov may provide introductory descriptions for the benefit of the reader. This is the case towards the beginning of Дама с собачкой:

Ему [Гурову] не было еще сорока, но у него была уже дочь двенадцати лет и два сына-гимназиста. Его женили рано, когда он был еще студентом второго курса, и теперь жена казалась в полтора раза старше его. [...] Изменить ей он начал уже давно, изменял часто и, вероятно, поэтому о женщинах отзывался почти всегда дурно, и когда в его присутствии говорили о них, то он называл их так:

-Низшая раса!

Ему казалось, что он достаточно научен горьким опытом, чтобы называть их как угодно, но все же без "низшей расы" он не мог бы прожить и двух

дней. [...] В его наружности, в характере, во всей его натуре было что-то привлекательное, неуловимое, что располагало к нему женщин, манило их; он знал об этом, и самого его тоже какая-то сила влекла к ним. (X, pp.128-29)

In neither Sterben nor Die Toten schweigen does Schnitzler provide anything but the most basic of details.

Irony too plays an important role in the four stories, as it does in much of their work. Relying on innuendo and suggestion, it forms part of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's laconic approach to literature. Apparently meaningless statements are invested with significance. As a result, the stories gain in depth and resonance at the expense of few extra words. Often, the full impact of ironic remarks emerges only in the knowledge of later developments, as, for instance, in Дама с собачкой when Gurov parts with Anna for the first time. Gurov's words, 'Мы навсегда прощаемся, это так нужно, потому что не следовало бы вовсе встречаться' (X, p.135), are ironic not just because he and Anna do in fact meet again, but because that meeting is an important turning point in their lives, laden with serious implications for the future. The reader's recollection of Gurov's earlier remarks lends additional poignancy to that meeting. The main irony of Дама с собачкой, however, as indeed of the other three stories, resides in the reversal of the characters' attitudes and relations to each other. In Черный монах, Chekhov gives us the additional irony of a man's happiness and wellbeing being dependent on an illusion, while in Die Toten schweigen, Schnitzler depicts the ironical situation of the heroine confessing her guilt only after she has escaped the threat of exposure. With great economy, Chekhov and Schnitzler portray the many facets of human behaviour; their use of irony enables them to highlight what they see as its often unpredictable and inexplicable manifestations.

With the possible exception of Черный монах, whose opening paragraph offers more in the way of a standard introduction, the succinct way in which the other three stories commence is both typical of a great many of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's stories, and characteristic of their laconic style in general. The opening of Дама с собачкой provides a good example:

Говорили, что на набережной появилось новое лицо: дама с собачкой. Дмитрий Дмитрич Гуров, проживший в Ялте уже две недели и привыкший тут, тоже стал интересоваться новыми лицами. (X, p.128)

The apparent casualness with which the story begins seems to presuppose a familiarity on the part of the reader with the situation, as if he is rejoining the action rather than coming to it for the first time. The beginning of Die Toten schweigen is equally succinct: 'Er ertrug es nicht länger, ruhig im Wagen zu sitzen; er stieg aus und ging auf und ab. Es war schon dunkel...' (I, p.296). Here too the reader appears to break in on a situation that has obviously already begun. Such openings heighten tension by mentioning scant details of people and events which arouse the reader's curiosity. In the latter example, the reader is invited to ponder the identity of the character in question, and to ask himself why the protagonist acts as he does. In short texts such as these, they ensure that valuable space is not wasted on unnecessary preambles. What details we need to know about the characters are generally conveyed as the story unfolds.

As far as endings are concerned, we have observed that where Chekhov's often leave matters deliberately unresolved, Schnitzler's generally bring the story to a rounded and clearcut conclusion. There is some deviation from this general trend in the endings of our four stories, however. Not just in Sterben but also in Черный монах, the deaths of the main protagonists bring the stories to a close in a way that eliminates any possible

continuation of the narrative. The story of Felix's mental deterioration and its effect on his relationship with Marie, ends unequivocally with his death. No less conclusively does Kovrin's death in Черный монах bring the story to an end. In both Дама с собачкой and Die Toten schweigen, however, the endings are left deliberately unresolved. The reader is allowed to draw his own conclusions about how Gurov's and Anna's relationship might develop in the former story, and how Emma's husband will receive her confession of unfaithfulness in the latter. It is ironic, but indicative of the inconclusiveness we find particularly in Chekhov, that Дама с собачкой ends with the words 'еще начинается' (X, p.123), thus hinting at the potential continuation of the heroes' problems if not of the story itself.²⁷⁷ Unresolved endings like these reinforce the randomness and unpredictability of life, underlining the fact that life goes inexorably on, irrespective of the personal experiences of each of the characters.

7.2.2 Narrative Perspective

As we have seen, Schnitzler shows great innovation in his use of different narrative perspectives, while Chekhov's stories run along more traditional lines of narration. We find this general trend borne out in the narrative style of our four stories. The main narrative voice of all four stories, however, is that of the omniscient narrator who observes and relates events

²⁷⁷ An example of the dissatisfaction some felt at the inconclusive ending of Дама с собачкой is seen in the reaction of S.S.Remizova. In a letter to Chekhov on 15 October 1903, she writes: 'Вы оставили своих героев, так сказать, в самую критическую пору их жизни, когда надо принять какое-нибудь решение, а какое? Вот трудный вопрос. ...Будьте добры, черкните несколько слов, как бы Вы поступили, будучи на месте Гурова [...] как бы Вы разрешили эту запутанную историю...' (X, p.426).

objectively without personally intruding. Shifts away from the narrator's perspective to the more immediate perspective of a participating character, recur frequently, however, focusing attention on the perceptions and psychological state of the individual characters. In Sterben and Die Toten schweigen, conspicuous by the widespread use of interior monologues, the emphasis tends to be shifted away from the external events themselves and placed more on the characters' reactions to them. Here too, moves into indirect interior monologue often coincide with increases in the emotional intensity of the characters, such as when Felix, in Sterben, having discovered Marie has left him to take a stroll in the park, begins to panic:

Er blieb allein. Eine Unruhe, qualvoll wie nie zuvor, befiel ihn. Wo ist sie, wo ist sie? Er hielt es im Bett kaum aus, aber er wagte es doch nicht, aufzustehen. Plötzlich fuhr es ihm durch den Kopf: Am Ende ist sie auf und davon! Sie will ihn allein lassen, für immer allein. Sie erträgt das Leben an seiner Seite nicht mehr. Sie fürchtet sich vor ihm. Sie hat in seinen Gedanken gelesen. Oder er hat einmal im Schlaf gesprochen und hat es laut gesagt, was immerwährend in der Tiefe seines Bewußtseins ruht, auch wenn er es tagelang selbst nicht deutlich faßt. Und sie will eben nicht mit ihm sterben. - Die Gedanken jagen durch sein Hirn. (E I, P.151)

The use of the present tense, here as elsewhere, rather than the more usual past, further highlights moments of psychological tension. Where these are at their most intense, Schnitzler employs the technique of free association. As Felix, in a state of semi-slumber, allows his mind to wonder, the technique is used to capture the random nature of his thoughts. This randomness is further highlighted by the abundant use of three dots in the punctuation:

Der Herbst ist so traurig und still... [...] ...Ach, es ist gut, daß Marie schläft, ich möchte sie jetzt nicht reden hören... Ob wohl auch Leute vom Sängerfest im Zuge sind?... Ich bin nur müde,

ich bin gar nicht krank. Es sind viel Kränkere im Zuge als ich... Ach, tut die Einsamkeit wohl... Wie ist nur heut der ganze Tag vergangen? War denn das wirklich heute, daß ich in Salzburg auf dem Divan lag? Das ist so lange her... Ja, Zeit und Raum, was wissen wir davon!... Das Rätsel der Welt, - wenn wir sterben, lösen wir es vielleicht... Und nun klang ihm eine Melodie ins Ohr. Er wußte, daß es nur das Geräusch des fahrenden Zuges war... Und doch war es eine Melodie... Ein Volkslied... ein russisches...eintönig...sehr schön...
(E I, p.138)

Elsewhere, we find passages of direct speech in the form of soliloquies and dialogues. All together, the variety of narrative perspectives provides the medium for a thorough examination of the characters' psychology. A passage towards the end of Die Toten schweigen best illustrates the depth of psychological insight that Schnitzler is thus able to achieve. In the space of a page of text, we witness a change from the perspective of the omniscient narrator, to Emma's indirect interior monologue, then to Franz's direct speech, (as imagined by Emma), and from there to the direct speech of wife and husband in conversation. Only then does it revert back to the voice of the omniscient narrator.

Eine unsägliche Müdigkeit überkommt sie - sie kann sich nicht beherrschen, sie fühlt, daß der Schlummer über sie kommt; sie schließt die Augen. Plötzlich fährt ihr eine Möglichkeit durch den Sinn... Wenn er nicht tot wär! Wenn er ... Ach nein, es war kein Zweifel möglich... Diese Augen... dieser Mund - und dann ... kein Hauch von seinen Lippen.- Aber es gibt ja den Scheintod. [...] Und... und...ja, was dann? [...] Franz wird wissen... er kennt sie ja so gut... er wird wissen, daß sie davongelaufen ist, und ein gräßlicher Zorn wird ihn erfassen, und er wird ihren Namen nennen, um sich zu rächen. [...] ...und es wird ihn so tief erschüttern, daß sie ihn in seiner letzten Stunde allein gelassen, daß er rücksichtslos sagen wird: Es war Frau Emma, meine Geliebte... feig und dumm zugleich, denn nicht wahr, meine Herren Ärzte, Sie hätten sie gewiß nicht um ihren Namen gefragt. [...] Aber da sie so schlecht gewesen ist, sag' ich Ihnen, wer sie ist...es ist...Ah!

"Was hast du?" sagt der Professor sehr ernst,
indem er aufsteht.
"Was...wie?... Was ist?"
"Ja, was ist dir denn?"
"Nichts." Sie drückte den Jungen fester an sich.
(E I, p.310-11)

Though variation of this kind in the narrative perspective is rare in Chekhov, not everything is seen from the point of view of the neutral narrator. In Дама с собачкой, for example, Anna is described in terms of Gurov's recollections of her:

Ложась спать, он вспомнил, что она еще так недавно была институткой, училась, все равно как теперь его дочь, вспомнил, сколько еще несмелости, угловатости было в ее смехе, в разговоре с незнакомым, - должно быть, это первый раз в жизни она была одна, в такой обстановке, когда за ней ходят, и на нее смотрят, и говорят с ней только с одной тайною целью, о которой она не может не догадываться. Вспомнил он ее тонкую, слабую шею, красивые, серые глаза. (X, p.130)

The passage takes the form of a kind of interior monologue although, unlike Schnitzler's passages of indirect and direct interior monologue, it does not aim at a strictly authentic portrayal of Gurov's mind at that moment.

Although we find internal narrative perspectives in Chekhov similar to those found in Schnitzler, passages of direct speech figure more widely as a means of psychological portrayal. Kovrin's dealings with the monk in Черный монах are conveyed to the reader by means of a straightforward dialogue; the anxieties that Gurov and Anna feel in Дама с собачкой are revealed chiefly through their conversations with each other. The manner in which conversations are conducted are often psychologically revealing too, as exemplified, for instance, by the nervous way Gurov and Anna talk to each other when they meet at the theatre for the first time since their Summer encounter (X, pp.139-40). A verbatim account of a letter from Tanya to Kovrin in Черный монах (VIII, p.255),

mentioned above, lends additional variety to the narrative texture.

The narrative techniques employed in Черный монах, Дама с собачкой, Sterben, and Die Toten schweigen are typical of those used in the majority of the stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler. Only the first-person narrator-character, encountered in such stories as Страх, Дом с мезонином, Моя жизнь, Die Frau des Weisen, Blumen, and Die griechische Tänzerin, is not here represented. The four stories reflect the main narrative perspectives which Chekhov and Schnitzler typically used and which illustrate their main concerns.

7.2.3 Stylistic Aspects

By using narrative perspectives which focus attention on the character's point of view, all four stories illustrate well the Impressionistic quality of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's work. As we would expect, we also find other techniques which are employed to depict reality in terms of the individual's perceptions. In the following passage from Die Toten schweigen, the sum effect of phrases referring directly and indirectly to Emma's senses and emotions, comparative phrases, and words of 'seeming', is to portray Emma's accident exactly as experienced by her:

In diesem Augenblick war ihr, als flöge der Wagen plötzlich in die Höhe - sie fühlte sich fortgeschleudert, wollte sich an etwas klammern, griff ins Leere; es schien ihr, als drehe sie sich mit rasender Geschwindigkeit im Kreise herum, so daß sie die Augen schließen mußte - und plötzlich fühlte sie sich auf dem Boden liegen, und eine ungeheure schwere Stille brach herein, als wenn sie fern von aller Welt und völlig einsam wäre. (E I, p.301)

Comparative phrases, (in Дама с собачкой, for instance, Anna and Gurov feel they have to meet 'как воры' (X, p.142), like 'перелетные птицы... в отдельных клетках'

(X p.143)), have the effect of depicting events in terms of the characters' personal view. Qualifying phrases such as 'быть может', 'vielleicht', reflect something of the doubt and uncertainty that comes from knowing that every individual is fallible. The effect of such phrases is to reinforce the notion that subjective perceptions are not absolute.

Confusion of temporal divisions enhances this element of uncertainty peculiar to Impressionism. The inability to differentiate between past, present and future experienced by Kovrin (VIII, p.232), Gurov (X, p.136) and Emma (E I, p.311), underlines the reduction of concrete realities to subjective, highly fluid sense-impressions. Impressionistic vocabulary, of the kind found in the following passage from Sterben,

Auf der weiten, ruhigen Wasserfläche lagen leichte Nebel, und es schien, als stiege die Dämmerung langsam aus dem See empor, um sich allmählich gegen die Ufer auszubreiten. (My emphasis) (E I, p.110)

further increases this sense of fluidity. Colours, sounds and smells frequently evoke associations, vivid memories and moods in the mind of the characters. This evocation of mood, a characteristic trait of literary Impressionism, is as much an objective of Chekhov's and Schnitzler's prose as the portrayal of human psychology. The mood evoked in Chekhov's description of the summer evening at Oreanda in Дама с собачкой, for example,²⁷⁸ or in Schnitzler's description of the weather in Die Toten

²⁷⁸ 'Ялта была едва видна сквозь утренний туман, на вершинах гор неподвижно стояли белые облака. Листва не шевелилась на деревьях, кричали цыкады, и однообразный, глухой шум моря, доносившийся снизу, говорил о покое, о вечном сне, какой ожидает нас. Так шумело внизу, когда еще тут не было ни Ялты, ни Ореанды, теперь шумит и будет шуметь так же равнодушно и глухо, когда нас не будет' (X, p.133). Note also Chekhov's use of onomatopoeia to reflect the sounds of the sea.

schweigen,²⁷⁹ is largely due to references to the colours and sounds of nature. Kovrin's hallucinations in Черный монах, as Derman points out²⁸⁰, are provoked by the sound of fiddle music (VIII, pp.232,241). Natural descriptions are sometimes contrived, however, so as to reflect symbolically the psychological states of the characters and their patterns of behaviour. There is a close association, for example, between natural beauty, warmth, and sunshine on the one hand, and such manifestations of positiveness as Kovrin's self-confidence inspiring hallucinations in Черный монах, Gurov's feelings of tenderness in Дама с собачкой, mutual affection between Felix and Marie in Sterben, on the other. The four stories are not exclusively Impressionistic, but they all make use of Impressionistic devices. Like the large majority of their stories, here too there is an emphasis on the two aspects most related to Impressionism, the portrayal of the characters' subjective perceptions, and the evocation of atmosphere.

Together with the Impressionistic features we find in

²⁷⁹...und als sie beide das Wasser unter sich rauschen hörten, blieben sie eine Weile stehen. Tiefes Dunkel war um sie. Der breite Strom dehnte sich grau und in unbestimmten Grenzen hin, in der Ferne sahen sie rote Lichter, die über dem Wasser zu schweben schienen und sich darin spiegelten. Von dem Ufer her, das die beiden eben verlassen hatten, senkten sich zitternde Lichtstreifen ins Wasser; jenseits war es, als verlöre sich der Strom in die schwarzen Auen. Jetzt schien ein ferneres Donnern zu ertönen, das immer näher kam; unwillkürlich sahen sie beide nach der Stelle, wo die roten Lichter schimmerten; Bahnzüge mit hellen Fenstern rollten zwischen eisernen Bogen hin, die plötzlich aus der Nacht hervorzuwachsen und gleich wieder zu versinken schienen. Der Donner verlor sich allmählich, es wurde still; nur der Wind kam in plötzlichen Stößen (E I, pp.299-300).

²⁸⁰Derman comments, 'Порою, музыка играет у Чехова существенную роль в развитии фабулы произведения. Такова, например, серенада Брага "Валахская легенда", исполнение которой в "Черном монахе" служит решающим звеном в цепи причин, вызывающих призрачную галлюцинацию у главного героя' (Derman, О Мастерстве, p.118).

the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler, we also find elements of symbolism. The four stories under consideration provide good examples of the kind of non-oblique, suggestive symbolical language we associate with the work of the two men. None of the symbolic elements we find in these particular stories obscure the literal meaning of the texts; rather, they lend resonance and depth by means of allusion and association. In Черный монах, for instance, the black monk can and should be understood on a literal level in terms of a symptom of Kovrin's nervous condition; in addition however, he is an ethereal figure, unbound by temporal and spatial limitations, and as such stands as a symbol of Kovrin's spiritual and intellectual aspirations. In the same way, that is by means of association and allusion, Schnitzler in Sterben uses a series of contrasting images not so much to symbolise as to give resonance to the polarity of life and death that is of such importance in the story. Contrasted with the image of the dawn, for example, 'so friedlich, so mild und so ewig' (E I, p.119), evoking the joyous expectations of life experienced by Marie, is the oppressive atmosphere of the 'engen, düstigen Zimmer' (ibid) in which Felix lies ill, with its associations of sickness and death. The same polarity is clearly borne out in the figures of the two protagonists, not just in the fact that where Felix is dying of a terminal illness, Marie enjoys full health. Marie's essentially happy disposition and energy for life, (as evidenced, for example, by her delight at the Salzburg carnival, and by her natural inclination to go out and meet new people (E I, pp.120, 149)), contrasts with Felix's irritability and depression. As 'symbols' of life and death respectively, their estrangement is inevitable from the outset. The names Felix and Marie address each other by is further suggestive of the deterioration of their relationship. Endearments like 'liebes Kind' and 'Miez', which Felix uses early in the story, become increasingly rare as the

roles of the protagonists are reversed and Felix becomes the one characterised by immaturity, ('Du bist ja ein Kind' (E I, p.163), Marie herself tells him in a moment of revealing honesty!). Felix is referred to more and more by the term 'der Kranke', thus highlighting his physical and moral degeneration, and underlining the loss of his identity as the Felix Marie once knew and loved.

As elsewhere in the stories of Chekhov and Schnitzler, descriptions of weather in Черный монах, Дама с собачкой, Sterben, and Die Toten schweigen also have associations with the psychological states of the characters, allowing a fuller understanding of the text. In Sterben, for example, the recurrent alternation between fine weather and poor gives additional resonance to Felix's variable psychological condition. There is also a link between the progression of the seasons and the development of his illness. His fatal condition is diagnosed in early summer, he enjoys his last period of good health during the rest of that summer, in autumn, we see a rapid deterioration in his condition, and he dies at the onset of winter. An association between seasonal factors and a character's physical and mental condition also obtains in Дама с собачкой, as well as Черный монах. Kovrin's period of greatest happiness, when he derives greatest pleasure from his conversations with the monk and from his relations with Tania, coincides with the first summer he spends on Pesotskiĭ's estate. Significantly, it is already winter when Tania begins to show her anxiety about Kovrin's condition, embarking on the plan to have him cured that heralds the 'cooling' of their relations. By the time the following summer arrives, Kovrin and Tania have already separated; by contrast with the previous year, this summer is spent in abject misery. Winter sees Kovrin's total physical deterioration. He dies in February, seeking in Yalta the warmth he associates with the happiest time in his life. Similarly,

the summer is a time of excitement and exploration for Gurov and Anna in Дама с собачкой. On holiday, and most importantly, away from their respective spouses, they appear to be happiest when enjoying each other's company in the balmy climate of the Crimean summer. Significantly, the onset of autumn accompanies their departure and what promises to be a final separation. Thereafter, the emotional pain which increasingly afflicts Gurov is aptly reflected in the intense cold of the Moscow winter. Even after he reestablishes contact with Anna, their meetings tend to take place during autumn and winter amid miserable weather conditions, as if to reinforce the bleak state of their relationship. Contrived as such allusions and correspondences undoubtedly are, they nevertheless add additional depth to otherwise compact texts.

For all the Impressionist and Symbolist techniques we may find in these stories, they belong to a tradition of Realist literature, which sought to depict life in terms familiar to the reader's own experience of the world. They do not, however, seek to emulate the realism of Naturalist writers like Zola²⁸¹, although they draw, where appropriate, on certain Naturalistic elements. The exact portrayal of illness and death, the use of local dialects, the naturalistic depiction of the human mind are some of the more common of these. The similarities, which Schnitzler himself acknowledged, between Sterben and a medical case-study, and the highly psychologised nature of both that story and Die Toten schweigen, bear

²⁸¹Perhaps this is what Gorky meant when, in a letter to Chekhov about Дама с собачкой, he wrote: 'Читал "Даму" Вашу. Знаете, что Вы делаете? Убиваете реализм. И убьете Вы его скоро - насмерть, надолго. Эта форма отжила свое время - факт! Дальше Вас - никто не может идти по сей стезе, никто не может писать так просто о таких простых вещах, как Вы это умеете' (Letter to Chekhov, after 5 January 1900, (X, p.425)).

witness to a closer affinity with Naturalism in Schnitzler's two stories than in Chekhov's. In Черный монах, however, Chekhov's choice of a Darwinist and horticulturalist in the figure of Pesotskiĭ, and his portrayal of the harsh treatment meted out to the estate workers by the owner, represent something of a passing tribute to the broader concerns of the Naturalists. The Naturalist elements in both men's work tend to be isolated features, however, and represent only one stylistic aspect among many.

7.3 Cultural Distinctions

Many of the thematic and stylistic aspects of Черный монах, Дама с собачкой, Sterben, and Die Toten schweigen examined hitherto attest to a common perception of the human condition. In addition, however, we find cultural references which bear witness to the national identity of the authors. It is the presence of such references in their stories as a whole that gives them what critics in the past have regarded as their Russian and Viennese quality respectively.

One of the clearest indications of this ethno-specific dimension in their literary works is the abundance of geographical references. The locations of each of the four stories are clearly defined. In Черный монах, Kovrin, we are told, visits the Pesotskiĭs on their estate near Moscow, departing eventually for the seaside resort of Sevastopol'. In Sterben, Felix and Marie leave Vienna for the Tyrolean mountains, returning via Salzburg, and leaving finally for Merano. The first part of Дама с собачкой is set in the environs of Yalta, the second part in Moscow and in an unspecified provincial town, while Die Toten schweigen takes place exclusively in and around Vienna. The specific settings of the stories introduce an element of local colour, the effect of which is to provide a neatly defined cultural context.

As if to emphasise the geographical and national identity of their stories, both Chekhov and Schnitzler refer to other specific, real-life landmarks familiar only to those readers with an intimate knowledge of the area. The references in Дама с собачкой, for example, to the 'павильон у Верне' near Yalta (X, p.128), and to the 'Славянский Базар' in Moscow (X, p.141), both of them famous institutions familiar to the kind of people for whom and about whom Chekhov was writing, underline the fact, first and foremost, that Chekhov is a Russian author writing for a Russian readership. We find similar references to specific landmarks in Sterben and Die Toten schweigen. The mention of such streetnames, bridges, parks, churches, as the Praterstraße, the Ringstraße, the Reichsbrücke, the Augarten, the Stadtpark, the Rathauspark, the Karlskirche, the Nepomukkirche, whose familiarity to his Viennese readers Schnitzler would have taken for granted, reinforce the specific Viennese quality of these and other stories. However 'universal' their stories may be in other ways, it is largely as a result of the widespread occurrence of landmarks like these that we recognise Chekhov and Schnitzler as products of their own nation and culture.

National identity is further manifested by cultural indicators other than place-names and landmarks, although these are generally less common in Chekhov than in Schnitzler. In Дама с собачкой, for instance, Chekhov alludes to what non-Russians can but only guess at, the misery of a Moscow winter. (Somewhat surprisingly, however, not a Russian song but an Italian song provokes Kovrin's hallucinations). Schnitzler incorporates equivalent cultural 'signposts' in Sterben and Die Toten schweigen: the Salzburg carnival, for instance, in the former, the coachman's thick Viennese accent in the latter. Underlining his lower class origins, his manner of speech, as illustrated in such phrases as 'Gnä' Herr'

(for 'Gnädiger Herr'), 'i' bin' (for 'ich bin'), 'wohin fahr'n mer denn' (for 'wohin fahren wir denn'), 'zug'richt' (for 'zusammengebrochen'), conveys nuances of characterisation which the non-Viennese reader cannot properly appreciate. It is because of the preponderance of such 'ethno-specific' features as these that Schnitzler's work, more so than Chekhov's, is sometimes seen as too specific. Where Chekhov's national background is now on the whole seen as incidental to the universal import of his literature, Schnitzler's work is more often regarded as having limited value for anyone who was not Viennese and alive at the turn of the century.²⁸² Such a view, however, is difficult to substantiate with reference to the two Schnitzler stories under consideration here. For all their many cultural references, Sterben and Die Toten schweigen provide convincing and universally relevant insights into the human psyche.

By comparison with Sterben and Die Toten schweigen, Черный монах and Дама с собачкой are both arguably more philosophical in nature, testifying to what is sometimes regarded as the brooding nature of Chekhov's work, and to the 'gloom' of the Russian mentality in general. There is, indeed, a philosophical strain in many of Chekhov's works, and the theme of the relationship between sanity, insanity, and spiritual wellbeing as we find it dealt with in Черный монах, perhaps bears this out more than most, but that Chekhov can be regarded as any more of a contemplative writer than Schnitzler, or that his

²⁸²In his introduction to Arthur Schnitzler: Materialien, Urbach argues that today Schnitzler is 'mehr Chronist der Verhältnisse seiner Zeit als Illuminator, als der er zu seinen Lebzeiten eher empfunden war' (Urbach, Arthur Schnitzler: Materialien, p.11). This conflicts with Norvezheskiĭ's comment, made as early as 1909, and with the view adopted in this thesis, that Schnitzler was 'как утонченный сын века... в тоже время и всенациональный европеец' (Norvezheskiĭ, 1909, p.64).

interest in the philosophical issues affecting humankind can be seen as the product purely of his Russian background, is a claim which should be treated with caution. Despite the seriousness of the subject matter of Черный монах, the naivety of Kovrin's dealings with the monk strikes something of a deliberately comical chord. In Дама с собачкой, Chekhov shows how the chance encounter of two ordinary human beings can bring unexpected complications into their otherwise unremarkable lives, and thus examines the way in which apparently inconsequential circumstances can take one by surprise. He avoids philosophising and melodrama, opting for an approach more akin to 'laughter through tears'. The tragicomical, matter-of-fact element in many of his later stories, (in Моя жизнь, Рассказ неизвестного человека, Анна на шее, Человек в футляре, Душечка, for example), runs contrary to what many see as the characteristic melancholia of Chekhov's work, and contrary to the commonly held view of the melancholic quality of the Russian spirit in general.

It is therefore ironic that we should encounter pessimism in the works of an Austrian who was writing at a time and in a city that was notorious for its gaiety and superficiality. It is as a reaction to such superficiality in public life, however, that Schnitzler calls upon his characters in their private lives to reexamine their values and worth, often in the face of such indomitable forces as love and death. In that sense, Sterben and Die Toten schweigen may be seen to reflect the dilemmas and concerns of a typically Viennese setting. Neither of these two stories is completely inseparable from the Viennese background in which they originated, yet each contains perspicacious observations about the human condition which are valid and relevant to men and women of all cultures and backgrounds. It may be argued that the influence of Schnitzler's social and

intellectual environment, as illustrated in his greater insistence on localised references and themes, was perhaps greater than Chekhov's, and that his stories are generally more Viennese orientated than Chekhov's are Moscow orientated, but the stories of both men, exemplified here by Черный монах, Sterben, Дама с собачкой, and Die Toten schweigen, are primarily concerned with universal issues which are not bound by any specific context. What local features we do find bring additional colour and variety to their stories, but do not obscure their broader relevance.

AFTERWORD

Despite the often insistent differences that we may discern in the work of Chekhov and Schnitzler as a whole, this thesis attempts to make clear that many aspects of their literary work, particularly of their narrative fiction, are directly and usefully comparable. It aims to demonstrate that the comparison of Chekhov's work with Schnitzler's is not a pointless academic exercise, but a valid method of unveiling important insights into both men's literary achievement. The relatively large number of critical works that have already been written on both Chekhov and Schnitzler need not necessarily undermine the worth of a comparative study such as this. Its value lies in the fact that it brings together the work of two writers who, though comparable in a great many respects, are all too often separated in critical studies because of their language and culture. By allowing a side-by-side analysis of the narrative fiction of two contemporaries, one Russian, the other Austro-Hungarian and Jewish, this work aims to do a service to the study of turn-of-the-century European literature as a whole.

APPENDIX A
TITLES OF STORIES

CHEKHOV

SCHNITZLER

1885

(Stories written before
1888 not listed)

Welch eine Melodie

1886

Er wartet auf den
vazierenden Gott

1887

Amerika
Erbschaft

1888

Спать хочется
Степь
Огни*²⁸³
Неприятность
Красавицы
Именины
Припадок
Сапожник и нечистая
сила

Der Fürst ist im Hause

1889

Пари
Княгиня
Скучная история

Mein Freund Ypsilon
Der Andere
Reichtum

1890

Воры
Гусев

Die drei Elixire

1891

Бабы
Дуэль
Жена
В Москве

Die Braut

²⁸³Titles marked with an asterisk are those which Chekhov deemed unworthy for inclusion in the Marks edition of his collected works.

1892

Попрыгунья
После театра
Отрывок*
История одного торгового
предприятия*
Из записной книжки старого
педагога*
В ссылке
Рыбья любовь*
Соседи
Палата но.6
Страх

Der Sohn
Sterben
Die kleine Komödie

1893

Рассказ неизвестного
человека
Володя большой и
Володя маленький

Komödiantinnen

1894

Черный монах
Бабы царство
Скрипка Ротшильда
Студент
Учитель словесности
В усадьбе
Рассказ старшего
садовника

Blumen
Der Witwer

1895

Три года
Супруга
Белолобый
Ариадна
Убийство
Анна на шее

Ein Abschied
Der Empfindsame

1896

Дом с мезонином
Моя жизнь

Die Frau des Weisen

1897

Мужики
В родном углу
Печенег
На подводе

Der Ehrentag
Die Toten schweigen

1898

У знакомых*
Ионыч
Человек в футляре
Крыжовник
О любви
Случай из практики

1899

По делам службы
Душечка
Новая дача
Дама с собачкой

Um eine Stunde
Die Nächste

1900

В овраге
На святках

Leutnant Gustl
Der blinde Geronimo
und sein Bruder
Frau Berta Garlan
Andreas Thameyers letzter
Brief
Wohltaten, still und rein
gegeben
Ein Erfolg
Legende

1901

Boxeraufstand
Die grüne Kravatte

1902

Архиерей

Die Fremde
Exzentrik
Die griechische Tänzerin

1903

Невеста

Das Schicksal des Freiherrn
von Leisenbohg

1904

Die Weissagung

1905-1910

Das neue Lied
[Der Weg ins Freie]
Geschichte eines Genies
Der Tod des Junggesellen

Der tote Gabriel
Das Tagebuch der
Redegonda
Der Mörder

1911-1920

Die dreifache Warnung
Die Hirtenflöte
Frau Beate und ihr Sohn
Doktor Gräsler,
Badearzt
Der letzte Brief eines
Literaten
Casanovas Heimfahrt

1921-1931

Fräulein Else
Die Frau des Richters
Traumnovelle
Spiel im Morgengrauen
Abenteurernovelle
[Therese]
Der Sekundant
Flucht in die Finsternis

APPENDIX B
TITLES SPECIFYING NARRATIVE CATEGORIES

CHEKHOV

Степь: История одной поездки
Скучная история: из записок старого человека
Отрывок
История одного торгового предприятия
Из записной книжки старого педагога
Страх: рассказ моего друга
Рассказ неизвестного человека
Рассказ старшего садовника
Дом с мезонином: рассказ художника
Моя жизнь: рассказ провинциала
У знакомых: рассказ

SCHNITZLER

Mein Freund Ypsilon: Aus den Papieren eines Arztes
Der Andere: Aus dem Tagebuch eines Hinterbliebenen
Die Braut: Studie
Der Sohn: Aus den Papieren eines Arztes
Die kleine Komödie
Der Empfindsame: Eine Burleske
Andreas Thamayers letzter Brief
Legende: [Fragment]
Boxeraufstand: [Fragment]
[Der Weg ins Freie: Roman]
Geschichte eines Genies
Das Tagebuch der Redegonda
Der letzte Brief eines Literaten
Traumnovelle
Abenteurernovelle: [Fragment]
[Therese: Chronik eines Frauenlebens]

APPENDIX C
DRAMATIC WORKS

CHEKHOV

- На большой дороге: драматический этюд в одном действии
(1884)
- Лебединая песня: драматический этюд в одном действии
(1886-87)
- Медведь: шутка в одном действии (1888)
- Предложение: шутка в одном действии (1888-89)
- Свадьба: сцена в одном действии (1889)
- Трагик поневоле. Из дачной жизни: шутка в одном действии
(1889-90)
- Юбилей: шутка в одном действии (1891)
- О вреде табака: сцена-монолог в одном действии (1886)
- [Безотцовщина: Пьеса в 4х действиях] (1880-81)
- Иванов: комедия в 4х действиях и 5и картинах (1887)
- Леший: комедия в 4х действиях (1889)
- Чайка: комедия в 4х действиях (1896)
- Дядя Ваня: сцены из деревенской жизни (1897)
- Три сестры: драма в 4х действиях (1900-01)
- Вишнёвый сад: комедия в 4х действиях (1903-04)

SCHNITZLER

- Alkandi's Lied: Dramatisches Gedicht in 1 Aufzuge (1889)
- Anatol:
- Einleitung. Von Loris
 - Die Frage an das Schicksal (1889)
 - Weihnachtseinkäufe (1891)
 - Episode (1888)
 - Denksteine (1890)
 - Abschiedssouper (1891)
 - Agonie (1890)
 - Anatols Hochzeitsmorgen (1888)
- Anatols Größenwahn (1891)
- Das Märchen: Schauspiel in 3 Aufzügen (1891)
- Die überspannte Person: Ein Akt (1894)

Halbzwei: Ein Akt (1894)
 Liebelei: Schauspiel in 3 Akten (1894)
 Freiwild: Schauspiel in 3 Akten (1896)
 Reigen (1896-97)
 Das Vermächtnis: Schauspiel in 3 Akten (1898)
 Paracelsus: Versspiel in 1 Akt (1898)
 Die Gefährtin: Schauspiel in 1 Akt (1898)
 Der grüne Kakadu: Groteske in 1 Akt (1898)
 Der Schleier der Beatrice: Schauspiel in 5 Akten (1899)
 Sylvesternacht: Ein Dialog (1900)
 Lebendige Stunden (1900-01)
 Lebendige Stunden
 Die Frau mit dem Dolche
 Die letzten Masken
 Literatur
 Der einsame Weg: Schauspiel in 5 Akten (1903)
 Marionetten: 3 Einakter (1901-04)
 Der Puppenspieler
 Der tapfere Kassian: Puppenspiel in 1 Akt
 Zum großen Wurstel: Burleske in 1 Akt
 Zwischenspiel: Komödie in 3 Akten (1905)
 Der Ruf des Lebens: Schauspiel in 3 Akten (1905)
 Komtesse Mizi oder der Familientag: Komödie in 1 Akt
 (1907)
 Die Verwandlung des Pierrot: Pantomime in 1 Vorspiel und
 6 Bildern (1908)
 Der tapfere Kassian: Singspiel in 1 Aufzug (1909)
 Der junge Medardus: Dramatische Historie in 1 Vorspiel
 und 5 Aufzügen (1909)
 Das weite Land: Tragikomödie in 5 Akten (1910)
 Der Schleier der Pierrette: Pantomime in 3 Bildern (1910)
 Professor Bernhardi: Komödie in 5 Akten (1912)
 Komödie der Worte: 3 Einakter (1914)
 Stunde des Erkennens
 Große Szene
 Das Bacchusfest
 Fink und Fliederbusch: Komödie in 3 Akten (1916)

Die Schwestern oder Casanova im Spa: Ein Lustspiel in
Versen: 3 Akte in 1 (1917)
Der Gang zum Weiher (1921)
Komödie der Verführung (1923)
Im Spiel der Sommerlüfte (1928)

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